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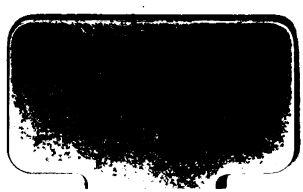
The Mirror of True Womanhood

By The

Rev

Bernard O'Reilly, D.L.

(Laval)



THE MIRROR OF TRUE WOMANHOOD

THE MIRROR

OF

TRUE WOMANHOOD

A BOOK OF INSTRUCTION

FOR

Women in the World

BY THE

REV. BERNARD O'REILLY, L.D.
(LAVAL.)

Reprinted from the Thirteenth American Edition

"At the present day, I swear to thee, that there are Women in the World of such excellence, that I have more envy of the life which they lead in secret, than of all the Sciences which the Ancients taught in public."—ANTONIO DE GUEVARA.

Second Edition.

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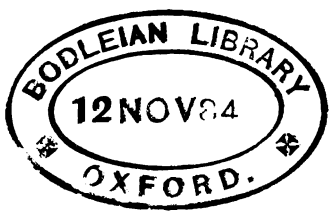

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TO

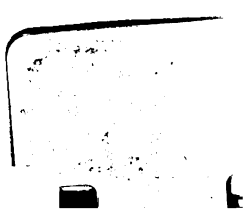
THE MEMORY OF

My Mother,

TAKEN FROM ME IN MY CHILDHOOD:

AN IRREPARABLE LOSS,

AND A LIFE-LONG REGRET.



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✠ JOHN CARDINAL M'CLOSKY,
ARCHBISHOP OF NEW YORK.

NEW YORK, *Nov.* 10*th*, 1877.

ARCHIEPISCOPAL RESIDENCE, QUEBEC,
November 16, 1877.

REV. B. O'REILLY, New York.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—I received in good time your letter of the 6th instant, with the first 256 pages of your last work, "The Mirror of True Womanhood."

Before sending you an answer I wished to read a few chapters of this book, and now I can but congratulate and thank you for it.

Pray accept once more my congratulation and thanks, and believe me your devoted servant,

✠ E. A., ARCHBISHOP OF QUEBEC

CINCINNATI,
November 12, 1877.

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Thanks for your beautiful new book, "The Mirror of True Womanhood." Like St. Francis de Sales' "Devout Life," written, I think, at the suggestion of the *Bon Henri* (Henry IV. of France), it shows, that if we should look for the perfect religious in convents, perfection is also attainable in the world.

May God grant you the *multos annos* to write more books!

Yours sincerely,

✠ J. B. PURCELL, ARCHBP., CINCINNATI.

---

278 OHIO-STREET, CHICAGO,
November 12, 1877.

REV. DR. O'REILLY,

DEAR REV. SIR,—The new work of which I have received the advance sheets to-day, "The Mirror of True Womanhood," is a work fitted to the times. It will be of vast service to many mothers and daughters in the Church, by showing them how they may practically conform their lives to the bright pictures of womanly virtue you have so felicitously portrayed. And if others outside the Church may be induced to look into your pages, how many may be saved who are eager to do good and live virtuously, and have no one to teach them!

Gratefully your servant,

✠ THOMAS FOLEY, BISHOP ADM. CHICAGO.

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THE AUTHOR'S PREFACE.

It is not without diffidence that this book is sent forth to take its place in the literature of Christian households. The form in which its teachings are imparted is novel, and may appear to many strange. But a word of explanation from the author may suffice to the fair-minded reader.

Ascetic works we have in superabundance; but these would not reach the class of readers for whom these chapters are destined, nor would they be taken up and perused in the hours which might be given to a work which is not professedly one of devotion. Perhaps, too, there may be found in the following pages instructions which will prove more attractive and profitable to its readers than the more arid lessons of the ascetic or the didactic writer.

The chief object which the author had in view in undertaking to write this book was to help, so far as his abilities permitted, in withstanding the spread of the prevailing naturalism, which is daily invading more and more our homes, the minds and lives of parents as well as of children.

If we can preserve the Home from its influence, by making of every mother a supernatural woman, living a life of faith, loving above all things self-denial and self-sacrifice, fondly attached to the heroic ways and virtues of our ancestors, the Home, in our midst, will bring forth supernatural men and women, unselfish, pure, truth-loving, trustworthy, and devoted to the best interests of country and religion.

What is attempted here may encourage others to pursue the same theme with far better prospects of success. This holy emulation would in itself reward the labour bestowed on this book; and who knows but, imperfect as it is, it may bring happiness to more than one hearth, light to more than one mind, and nobler aims to more than one life hitherto wasted? It is not only the

fruits which autumn pours into our homes

that are treasured by young and old alike; the very last withered leaves which the storms of the dreary November weather whirl along the road-side, or through the forest wastes, may serve as a welcome couch to the benighted wayfarer or the homeless outcast.

And, dear reader, do not quarrel with the writer's method. A book written for pleasant recreation, as well as for solid instruction, cannot be like the broad surface of a royal river over which the largest and the smallest craft can move together without hindrance or interruption. Our path, in these chapters, lies along a shallow stream, amid sylvan scenery: we can rest in the noonday heat beneath the shadow of some wooded, over-hanging crag, stretching our limbs on the green sward, inhaling the fragrant air, and soothed by the noisy river beneath as it frets and foams among the rocks, discoursing the while on the Home we have left, and on the busy world towards which we are journeying. Or, as we wend our way later along shady banks where the stream glides, noiseless and unruffled, as if it also reposed after a toilsome passage, we can discuss together

the difficulties of life's road, examine the grounds of our hopes and our fears, propose in turn our ideals and aims; and thus beguiling the length of the way, forget the sultry weather, and the flight of time, till, with the declining sun, we descry afar the streamlet joining the broad river, where the river itself skirts the vast and crowded city, and mingles with the golden expanse of the vast ocean beyond.

Enjoy the shady and restful nooks you will find as you proceed from chapter to chapter; open your eyes to the prospects they here and there afford; and if they prompt you, in looking on the pleasant earth around, or in gazing up into the blue heavens overhead, in picking up the simple flower that springs by the wayside, or listening to the sweet songsters of thicket and grove, to bless the Great Giver of all that is good and beautiful, you will be grateful to your guide ere your journey's end.

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THE MIRROR

OF

TRUE WOMANHOOD.

CHAPTER I.

THE TRUE WOMAN'S KINGDOM—THE HOME.

"Who is not struck with beholding your lively faith, your piety full of sweetness and modesty, your generous hospitality, the holiness which reigns within your families, the serenity and innocence of your conversation!"—ST. CLEMENT, Pope and Martyr, *First Epistle to the Corinthians.*

WE are about to describe the sacred sphere within which God has appointed that true women should exercise their sway, that most blessed kingdom which it is in their power to create, and over which the Author of every most perfect gift will enable them to reign with an influence as undisputed as it may be boundless for all good. The home of the Christian family, such as the Creator wills it to be, and such as every true woman can make it, is not only the home of the wealthy and the powerful, but more especially still that of the poor and the lowly; for these constitute the immense majority of mankind, and must ever be the chief object of his care, who is Father and Lord over all. From Him spring the laws which regulate all the sweet duties of family life, and the graces which enable the members of a household to make of their abode a paradise.

Hence it is, that when the Author of our nature deigned to become man, and to subject Himself to these same laws and duties, He chose not a palace for his abode, nor a life of wealthy ease while upon earth, but the poor home of an artisan, and the life of toil and hardship which is the lot of the multitude. It was a most blissful design, worthy of the infinite wisdom and goodness. The human parents He chose were of royal blood, that the highest on earth might learn from Joseph and Mary how holiness can exalt princes to nearness to God, and how the most spotless purity can be the parent of a regenerated world. And He made all his human virtues bloom in the carpenter's home at Nazareth, in order that the poorest labourer might know that there is not one sweet virtue practised by the God-Man, Jesus, which the last and hardest driven of the sons and daughters of toil may not cultivate in their own homes, though never so poor, so naked, or so narrow.

So, dear reader, standing on the shore of the calm and beautiful Lake of Galilee, near which our Lord was reared, let us see his humble home and his home-life reflected therein, as in a most beautiful mirror; and with that divine image compare our own home, and the life with which we study to adorn it.

There is nothing here below more sacred in the eyes of that good God who governs all things, and will judge all men in due time, than

THE FAMILY HOME.

All the institutions and ordinances which God has created in civil society or bestowed upon his Church,

have for their main purpose to secure the existence, the honour, and the happiness of every home in the community, from that of the sovereign or supreme magistrate to that of the most obscure individual who labours to rear a family. There is nothing on earth which the Creator and Lord of all things holds more dear than this home, in which a father's ever watchful care, untiring labour, and enlightened love, aim at creating for his children a little Eden in which they may grow up to the true perfection of children of God; in which a mother's unfailing and all-embracing tenderness will be, like the light and warmth of the sun in the heavens, the source of life, and joy, and strength, and all goodness to her dear ones, as well as to all who come within the reach of her influence.

The most learned men of modern times agree in saying that the sun's light and warmth are, in the order established by the Creator, the sources of all vegetable and animal life on the surface of our globe. They regulate the succession of seasons, the growth of all the wonderful varieties of tree and shrub and flower and grass that make of the surface of the earth an image of paradise. They give health and vigour to the myriads of animals of every kind that live in the air or in the waters or on the dry land, and to which, in turn, the vegetable world furnishes food and sustenance. The very motion given to the rain in falling, to the rivers in their course, to the oceans and their currents, comes from that sun-force, as well as the clouds which sail above our heads in the firmament and the lovely colours that paint them. Nay, there is not a single beauty in the million-million shades which embellish the flowers of grove,

or garden, or field, or clothe, at dawn, or noontide, or sunset, the face of earth and heaven, which is not a creation of glorious light, the visible image of his divine countenance, in whom is the source of all splendour, and life, and beauty.

Even so, O woman, within that world which is your home and kingdom, your face is to light up and brighten and beautify all things, and your heart is to be the source of that vital fire and strength without which the father can be no true father, the brother no true brother, the sister no true sister, since all have to learn from you how to love, how to labour lovingly, how to be forgetful of self, and mindful only of the welfare of others.

The natural affection by which the Creator of our souls draws to each other husband and wife, and which, in turn, they pour out on their children and receive back from these in filial regard and reverence, is the very source of domestic happiness. We cannot estimate too highly this holy mutual love which knits together the hearts of parents and children. It is as necessary to the peace, the comfort, the prosperity, and the bliss of every home, as the dew and the rain and the streams of running water are necessary to the husbandman for the fertility of the land he cultivates, and the growth of the harvest on which depend both his subsistence and his wealth.

Let the dew and rain of heaven cease to fall on the fairest valley, let the springs of living water be dried up all over its bosom, and the rivers which brighten and fertilise it cease to flow but for a few seasons, and it will be like the vale of death, forsaken of every living thing.

Do you wish, O reader, to learn how the springs

of true life, of true love and joy, may flow, unfailing and eternal, within the little paradise of your home? Then weigh well the words of the great Martyr-Pope placed at the head of this chapter. These point out the virtues and qualities which should adorn every household in which Christ is worshipped:—a lively faith, a piety full of sweetness and modesty, a generous hospitality, holiness of life, serenity and innocence of conversation. Let us examine together how much there is in every one of these. We need not send to a great distance for one of those men famed for their skill in discovering hidden and plentiful springs of water beneath the surface of the ground. Their mysterious knowledge and the use of their magic wand are useless here; for here we have seven pure and exhaustless wells of living water created for our home by the Maker of all things, and placed ready to our hand for every need.

And, first of all, is a lively faith. We Christians are given that eye of the soul which enables us to see the invisible world, as if the veil which hides it were withdrawn. God becomes to us an ever-present, most sweet, and most comforting reality. The great patriarch, Abraham, was bidden, in his long exile, and as a sure means of bearing up against his manifold trials, to walk before God—that is, to have God ever present before the eye of his soul. This sense of the Divine Majesty as a vision always accompanying us in our every occupation, in labour as well as repose, just as the pillar of cloud went with the Israelites in their journeyings towards the Promised Land, gives wonderful light to us in our darkness and difficulties, cheers us marvellously in distress and

adversity, lightens the hardest labour and the most intolerable burden, imparts a divine strength in the hour of temptation; for what can we not undertake and accomplish, what enemy can we not resist and put to flight, when we feel that his eye is on us, that we have Him there face to face, that his arm is ever stretched out to support and shield us, and that all the love of his fatherly heart sweetens the bitterness of our struggle, and rewards our generosity of overcoming all for his sake?

Joseph and Mary at Nazareth were privileged above all human beings to behold that Wisdom which created the world living and labouring daily beneath their humble roof, and growing up into the successive perfection of holy infancy, boyhood, and manhood, while concealing his quality from the surrounding multitude, and revealing only to a few like themselves his Godhead and his mission. It is certain that He practised all the virtues and fulfilled all the duties of his age and station in the way best fitted to glorify his Father: He was enlightening the world, sanctifying Himself, and marking out the path of life as truly for every one of us, during these long and obscure years of his abode in Nazareth, as when his teaching and his miracles drew around Him all Galilee and Judea.

And what an eloquent lesson was there, exemplifying that "life of faith" without which the existence of the Christian man or woman is barren of all supernatural merit! Christ, in the helpless years of his infancy and boyhood, when his life was one of entire dependence and submission, glorified and pleased his Father by solely seeking his good-will and

pleasure in obeying those appointed his earthly parents, and in accomplishing the obscure duties of his age. This lesson Joseph and Mary were not slow to learn and to practise. They read, in the rapt charity with which their worshipped Charge offered to the Divine Majesty every day and hour and moment of these golden years of toil, this all-important law of life for the children of God: "That the value of what we do does not depend on the greatness or publicity of the work accomplished; but on the spirit of love towards the Father with which it is undertaken and carried out; and that the pure purpose and offering of the heart is what God prizes above all else."

It has been the constant belief and teaching of Christian ages that the lives of Joseph and Mary, consumed in the voluntary poverty, lowliness, and toil of their condition, were ennobled, elevated, sanctified, and made most precious before God by being, after the example of the Divine Model before them, devoted to God alone, and animated by the one sole thought and purpose of pleasing and glorifying Him by perfect conformity to his holy will.

The Mother who ruled in this most blessed home beheld, in the Divine Babe confided to her, the Incarnate Son of God walking before her in the true way of holiness, and, like Him, she applied herself to set the Eternal Father constantly before her eyes, studying to make every thought and word and aim and action most pleasing to that Infinite Perfection.

When Christ had begun his public life, when the home at Nazareth was broken up, and Mary had taken up her abode with her kinsfolk at Capharnaum,

the light of the Father's countenance, in which she had learned to live, accompanied her, and the grace of her Son's example continued to surround her like a living atmosphere. After the terrible scenes at Calvary, and the glories of the ascension, she brought with her to the home which St. John and his mother, Mary Salome, so lovingly offered her, the image of her Crucified Love, as the one great mirror in which she could behold the new heights of sanctity and self-sacrifice which she was called on to tread with Him.

Since her day who was Mother of our Head, Mother of the Church which she laboured to beget and to form, and Mother of us all, since she quitted her home on earth for heaven, the image of the Crucified God has ever been the chief ornament, the principal light, and the great Book of Life in every true Christian home.

Not one saintly mother among the millions who have trained sons and daughters, ay, and husbands and dependents, to be the true followers of Christ, his apostles and his martyrs, when need was, but always his faithful servants and imitators, who did not read in the ever open page of her crucifix how she might best lead a life of self-sacrifice, and best induce her dear ones to be "crucified to the world."

But let no one fancy that, in placing before her this holy model-home of the ever-blessed Mother of God, it is the intention of the writer to urge anyone who chances to read these pages to expect to equal in self-sacrifice either herself or her Divine Son. No; the aim of the instruction here given is to encourage all who look into this mirror to adorn their homes

with some of the heavenly flowers which bloomed in Nazareth, to bring to the performance of their daily duties in their own appointed sphere, that lofty spirit of unselfish devotion to God which will make everything they do most precious in his sight, transform the poorest, narrowest, most cheerless home into a bright temple filled with the light of God's presence, blessed and protected by God's visiting angels, and fragrant with the odour of paradise. It is merely sought to open to the darkened eyes visions of a world which will enable the burdened soul to bear patiently and joyously the load of present ills, to fire the spirit of the careworn and the despairing with an energy which will enable them to take up the inevitable cross and follow Mary and her Son up to heights where rest is certain and the promised glory unfading.

No; you shall not be asked to quit your home, or exchange your occupations, or add one single particle to the burden of your toil, your care, or your suffering; but she, who is the dear Mother of us all, will teach you, by the silent voice of her example, how to bring the light of heaven down into your home, the generosity of the children of God into the discharge of your every occupation, and the sweet spirit of Christ to ennoble your toil, to brighten your care and your suffering.

Travellers among the loftiest mountains often chance upon calm bright lakes, within whose crystal depths are mirrored not only the blue heavens into which the eagle alone can soar, and the cold, ice-covered summits which only the feet of the most daring few have trodden, but the low and fertile hills

around the shore covered with the green woods, the healthful pastures, and frequented by the shepherds and their flocks. It is to these lovely, safe, and accessible heights of virtue that this little book would guide the footsteps of mother and maiden alike.

And of such easy access is the height of purity of intention and living faith which should be the constant light of your home. It is characteristic of the depth and constancy of womanly affection that the thought of the loved one, during the longest and most painful absence, will suffice to sustain them and to brighten a life which otherwise would appear cheerless. Thus it is said of that truest of wives,

ST. ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY,

that during her young husband's long spells of absence, at court or in the wars, she was wont to animate herself and her large household by the thought of how much he would be pleased, on his return, that they had endeavoured to do everything as they knew he would wish them. Elizabeth, before her marriage, had received from him, in a moment of bitter trial to her, a small pocket-mirror, which gentlemen in those days usually carried with them. It was of polished silver, with the reverse adorned with a crucifix set in gems. She never parted with this dear pledge of his truth, often taking it out of her satchel to kiss it. During her cruel widowhood, and when driven ruthlessly forth from her palace with her helpless orphans, she would continually hold this mirror in her hand, kissing the image of her crucified Lord, and recommending unceasingly

to his mercy the soul of her husband. Nor was this perpetual remembrance of him a source of prayerful resignation only: it also stirred her up to vindicate the rights of his plundered children. As she pleaded their cause before the Thuringian nobles, she would hold the well-known mirror in her hand, kiss it frequently, and press it to her heart, as if to warm herself to greater energy and eloquence. Nor were her nobles insensible to their young mistress's fidelity and truth to her earthly love.

In like manner, if the thought of God and the remembrance of his incomparable love have any influence on our lives, they will be the soul of all our actions, inspiring, directing, cheering, and sustaining us in all that we plan and undertake and suffer day after day.

St. Clement next praises, in the Corinthians, a "piety full of sweetness and modesty." Piety is a word of Latin origin, and, among the old Romans who first used it, meant that spirit of dutiful and generous love with which children do the will and seek the interests of their parents. This sense of free, generous, disinterested, and unselfish devotion to the happiness, honour, and interests of one's parents, is always contrasted with the selfish, mercenary, or compulsory service of a slave or a servant in a family. True-hearted children make their happiness to consist in seeking how they can best please and honour father and mother: what they do is not dictated by the fear of punishment, or the hope of reward, or the prospect of gain or self-gratification. The hope or certainty of delighting or pleasing or helping the dear authors of their being,

such is the thought which prompts the labours or obedience of a loving child.

Not so the mercenary: his motive is to gain his wages. He bargains to do so much in return for such a wage. The happiness of the family, the interest or honour of his employers, their satisfaction or the praise which they may bestow, do not, most likely, enter into the thoughts or calculations of venal souls.

You have known, perhaps, in many families, daughters so noble-minded, that they were content to labour untiringly for their parents, placing their whole delight in doing all they could to lighten the burden of father and mother, or to make the home bright and pleasant for brothers and sisters, without seeking or expecting one word of praise or acknowledgment. This is the best description of filial piety.

Only transfer to God's service that same unselfish and generous disposition, asking yourself only how much you can do to please Him, to glorify Him, to make yourself worthy of Him, to make Him known and have Him loved and served by others, and you have an idea what piety towards God is.

Thus faith gives to the soul that "purity of intention" which not only makes the thought of God habitual, but enables one to lift one's eye towards the Divine Majesty in everything that one does—in labour as well as in repose, in suffering as well as in enjoyment, at home and abroad, in company and conversation, as well as in solitude and silence. It kindles in the heart that flame of love which makes one burn with the absorbing desire of pleasing Him supremely.

It is thus the foundation of piety, the motive power of every good work, just as fire is the generating force of steam, and steam itself is the mighty force which annihilates distance on sea and land, and transforms all the industries of the modern world.

The soul accustomed to keep God before her eyes in all her ways, cannot help being pious in the truest sense: nothing can prevent her from seeking in all that she does the divine pleasure, and of esteeming all that she can do and suffer too little for so great a majesty and such incomparable goodness.

This piety, working ever beneath that all-seeing eye, must be both sweet and modest: sweet, in the calmness and gentleness with which everything is undertaken and accomplished; modest, in that no seeking of self and no consciousness of evil can disturb or overcast the limpid purity of a soul which reflects only the light and serenity of heaven, and is divinely sheltered from every blast of earthly passion.

When we remember who these early Christians were whose sweet and virginal piety was praised by St. Clement, we are filled with astonishment at the total and sudden transformation which the truth of the Gospel, the knowledge and imitation of Christ and his Virgin Mother, effected in the most ill-famed city of the pagan world, and the most abandoned population known to history. The very name of Corinth was odious to the ancient Romans of the true republican era; and when she fell beneath the Roman arms, she was utterly blotted out, lest the simplicity and austerity of the conquering race should become corrupt by contact with the voluptuous city. A Roman colony was afterwards planted there, and

Corinth arose once more from her ruins on that enchanted shore, shorn, indeed, of her greatness and power, but scarcely less infamous than her former self. It was like the alkali plains of our western territories, where nothing seems able to grow but the sagebrush which saddens the eye. No sooner had St. Paul preached there, practising all that he preached, than piety, purity, and modesty—all the gentle virtues of Mary's home at Nazareth—spread with the faith from house to house in Corinth, till the infant Church there resembled a society of angelic men and women.

In soil deemed hitherto incapable of producing a single fruit of heavenly modesty the cross of Christ had been planted; the curse of centuries was removed, and the land began to be fair with flowers of supernatural promise. What was the part of woman in this extraordinary renovation? Three women are mentioned in the New Testament as having been associated with the Apostles in the work of planting and fostering the Christian faith in the beautiful city and its dependencies—Prisca or Priscilla, Chloe, and Phebe, revered as saints from the apostolic times by the churches of the East and West alike. It was in the house of Priscilla that St. Paul took up his abode when he first arrived at Corinth. Her husband, Aquila, was, like Paul himself, a tent-maker; for it was the admirable custom, even of the highest and most wealthy Jewish families, to teach every one of their sons some trade or handicraft, which might place them above want, and thereby secure their independence when persecution or adverse fortune deprived them of country and riches. Aquila had

been expelled from Rome by the Emperor Claudius just before Paul's arrival on the Isthmus of Corinth, and was working at his craft of tent-maker, weaving for that purpose the hair of the Phrygian goat into a much esteemed and waterproof cloth. Their common craft was a first bond of intimacy between the great apostle and this household; the Christian faith drew them still closer together. At any rate, though Priscilla and her husband opened their home and their hearts to the apostle and the divine message which he bore, we know from Paul himself that he would be beholden to no one for his support and that of his fellow-labourers in the Gospel. Still that laborious and well-ordered household became the cradle of Christianity in Western Greece, the first sanctuary in Corinth where the Divine Mysteries were celebrated, and the word of God explained to the highest and lowest among the proud, cultivated, and pleasure-loving population. Not unlike Priscilla was Chloe, in all probability also a married woman, while Phebe, the female apostle of Cenchreæ, the eastern suburb and seaport of Corinth, was unmarried, a deaconess, and the first fruits, on that long-polluted land, of the Virgin-Life destined to be so fruitful of holiness in Christian Europe.

Priscilla and her husband followed Paul to Ephesus, in Asia, a city scarcely less ill-famed than Corinth, where the devoted and energetic wife shared the mortal dangers which beset the apostle, and instructed in the Christian faith the accomplished and eloquent Apollos, who was sent to Corinth to continue there the good work so gloriously begun. When Paul was sent in chains to Rome, the noble woman

and her worthy husband forsook everything, risked even life itself to be near him, and to share his labours and perils. Priscilla's house in Rome became a church, a centre of Christian activity and charity, and Chloe and Phebe's names are associated with hers in the heartfelt commendations of the imprisoned apostle, and the undying gratitude and veneration of every succeeding age.

Most blessed, therefore, of God and man was the sweet and gentle piety, as well as the unbounded hospitality of these early Christian homes. But pass we not lightly over this great home-virtue of hospitality: this and the two other precious virtues mentioned by St. Clement we must reserve to the next chapter.

CHAPTER II.

THE HOME VIRTUES (CONTINUED)—HOSPITALITY, HOLINESS, AND INNOCENCE OF CONVERSATION.

Let each one inquire in the Church for the poor and the stranger; and when he meets them, let him invite them to his house; for with the poor man Christ will enter it. He who entertains a stranger entertains Christ. The glory of a Christian is to receive strangers and pilgrims, and to have at his table the poor, the widow, and the orphan.—ST. EPHREM, *De Amore Pauperum.*

HOSPITALITY.

THE Christian religion, besides inheriting all the divine legislation of preceding ages, and consecrating all that was ennobling and purifying in public and private life, perfected every virtue practised by Jew and Gentile by assigning to each a supernatural motive, and by assisting the weakness of nature with most powerful graces.

Doubtless, in the most ancient times, men, wherever they chanced to live, were not altogether unmindful of their being sprung from the same parents, and the first impulse of nature urged them to open their house to the stranger as to a brother, one who was their own flesh and blood. In the patriarchal ages we find a higher motive superadded to that of common brotherhood: that to receive the stranger was to discharge a debt due to God Himself—that to shut him out was, possibly, to close one's door against the

Deity in disguise. Abraham and his nephew Lot gave hospitality to angels disguised in human form, and were rewarded, the former by the birth of Isaac, the latter by being saved with his family from the terrible destruction in which Sodom and the neighbouring cities were involved.

Not dissimilar was the reward divinely granted to the poor pagan widow of Sarephta, who harboured and fed the famished and fugitive prophet Elias, and to the wealthy lady of Sunam, who sheltered Elisæus. Their generous hospitality was rewarded by the restoring to life of the only son of each.

But in the Gospel, Martha and Mary made their home the resting-place of the Incarnate God, and their hospitality was accompanied by a public and unhesitating confession of their Guest's divinity, and that, too, at a time when He was most opposed and persecuted by the leading men of the nation. Not only were they also rewarded by the restoration to life of their dead brother, but they had the further recompense of becoming the apostles of the Divine Master.

This was, moreover, the return made by Him to His Mother's cousin, Mary Salome, mother of St. James the Elder, and St. John the apostle, for the hospitality so generously bestowed on Mary after the breaking up of her own home at Nazareth. The same may be said of that other Mary, the sister of the apostle St. Barnabas, and the mother of another apostle, John-Mark. It is the common tradition that her house was that in which our Lord celebrated the Last Supper, in which the Blessed Virgin found a refuge during the interval between the Crucifixion

and the Resurrection, and in which the apostles and disciples were wont to assemble till the Holy Ghost came down on them.

Certain it is that there the faithful were wont to meet with Peter and the other apostles till after the martyrdom of St. Stephen and St. James, the imprisonment and miraculous liberation of St. Peter, and the visit made to him by St. Paul after the latter's conversion. Her home was the common home of the infant church of Jerusalem, and, as tradition affirms, the first Christian church in that city. This generous mother's hospitality was rewarded by seeing both her brother and her son called to the glorious labours and perils of the apostleship.

Thenceforward, the bestowing hospitality was for the mistress of a Christian household to receive Christ Himself, the God of Charity, in the person of every guest who crossed her threshold, be he rich or poor, kinsman or stranger, friend or foe, sick or loathsome, the holiest of men or the most abandoned of sinners.

But we must reserve for another place the rules of hospitality to be observed by the mistress of the home and all her dependents. We are at present only pointing out the distinctive character and the ideal of Christian hospitality.

HOLINESS.

A holy house is one in which God is truly King; in which He reigns supreme over the minds and hearts of the inmates; in which every word and act honours his name. One feels on entering such a house, nay, even on approaching it, that the very

atmosphere within and without is laden with heavenly influences. Modern authors have written elegantly and eloquently about the home life which was the source of all domestic virtues and all public greatness in the powerful nations of antiquity. They describe, in every household, in the poor man's cabin as well as in the palace, that altar set apart for family worship, on which the sacred fire was scrupulously watched and kept alive night and day. No one ever went forth from the house without first kneeling at that altar and paying reverence to the divinity of the place, and no one, on returning, ever saluted his dearest ones before doing homage there. There, too, at night the household met for prayer and adoration, and there again with the dawn they knelt together to beg, on the labours of the day before them, the blessing of the Deity worshipped by their fathers.

This altar and this undying fire were regarded as a something so holy that only the most precious wood and the purest material was employed to feed the flame. Nothing filthy or defiled was permitted to approach the spot; and every indecent word uttered or act committed near it was deemed a sacrilege. This hearth-altar, or hearth-fire, as it was called, was symbolical of the fate of the family. If it was neglected and allowed to die out, this was deemed an irreparable calamity foreboding the ruin of the home, and the extinction of the race.

In the Christian home it is the flame of piety, ardent love for God, and charity towards the neighbour, which constitutes the hearth-fire that should ever burn bright. Old Catholic homes—how many of our

readers will remember it?—were wont to have the cross placed outside as a symbol of the love for the Crucified which ruled all hearts within; and in the interior his name, as well as his image, could be seen on almost every wall, informing the stranger-guest that he was in the house of the common Parent, and in the midst of dear brethren.

And how many of us may also remember the poor but cleanly cottage of the labourer, or the narrow room of city families, on whose bare but white walls there was no ornament but the crucifix, and no glory but that of the Holy Name, written there as a seal of predestination?

Where the fire of divine love is fed as carefully, and the mother and her daughters watch as jealously as the Roman matrons and maidens of old that its flame shall never be extinguished, there is little fear that any conversation but what is "innocent" shall prevail. Purity and charity are the twin lights of every home deserving of God's best blessing and man's heartfelt veneration.

WHAT THE HOME OUGHT NOT TO BE.

The Spaniards say, "Shut the door and the devil passes by;" the true woman who has read the preceding pages, and understood the teaching conveyed therein, will know how to preserve her home-sanctuary from evil. It is, comparatively, an easy task to cultivate and cherish in one's own life, and in the souls of those nearest and dearest to one, all the sweet virtues and holy habits indicated above, or connected with true piety. But how hard it is, when

once evil habits have been formed, to resist or reform them! There are certain horrible skin diseases to which persons of the purest blood and most refined nature are most liable. And the terrible poison, sometimes caught by a breath, or a touch of the hand, once deposited in blood hitherto untainted, will spread instantaneously, and commit the most fearful ravages.

So it is with souls highly privileged: a single voluntary act of sin may be followed by such a state of spiritual leprosy, that all their former beauty and glory appear changed into hideous deformity and seemingly incurable corruption.

Be careful to keep evil far away from the hearts of your dear ones; and close and bar the door of your home at all times when you know that wickedness is abroad in the street or on the highway. Keep out the fatal influences which might weaken or destroy the precious boon of Christian faith in your household; bar and bolt your door against uncharitableness, immodesty, and that odious spirit of irreverence towards age, authority, and all that our fathers have taught us to respect and love.

And, oh, women who read this, learn here how to make your home, though never so poor and bare, lovely to your dear ones, and an object of respect and envy to all who know you. This you shall be taught in the next chapter.

CHAPTER III.

HOW THE POOR MAN'S HOME CAN BE MADE RICH AND BRIGHT AND DELIGHTFUL BY A TRUE WOMAN'S INDUSTRY.

As it was to a poor and lowly home that the Son of God came when He began the work of our redemption, as it was in the home of a poor mother that He lived so contentedly during thirty years, so, ever since, his followers have looked upon the dwellings of the poor with inexpressible love and tenderness. Ah! he is no true lover of Christ who is not drawn to the home of poverty and labour; and the spirit of Christ dwells not in the heart whose sympathies do not go forth to the trials and distresses of those who are, above all others, the friends of Jesus Christ.

But our concern is now with the wife, the daughter, the sister of the labouring man and the poor man; we wish them to understand what royalty of spirit can and ought to be theirs, in order to be the true imitators and true children of that great Mother who knew how to make the poor home of Joseph so rich, so bright, so blissful, so lovely in the eyes of men and angels.

She, too, was of right royal blood who was the mistress of that little home where Joseph toiled, and the Divine Child grew up in all grace and sweetness,

like the lily of the valley on its humble stem beneath the shadow of the sheltering oak.

Woman's entire existence, in order to be a source of happiness to others as well as to herself, must be one of self-sacrifice. The first step in this royal pathway to all goodness and greatness is to forget self. Self, with its miserable little cares and affections, is the root of all the wretchedness we cause to others, and all the misery we endure ourselves. Every effort we make to forget self, to leave self behind us, and to devote ourselves to the labour of making every person with whom we are bound to live happy, is rewarded by interior satisfaction and joy. The supreme effort of goodness is, not alone to do good to others—that is its first and lower effect—but to *make* others good. So with unselfishness: the first step is to forget one's own comfort, in order to seek that of others; the next is to forget one's own pains and suffering, in order to alleviate those of others, or even to discharge towards others the duties of sisterly or neighbourly kindness.

What every Christian country needs most are these great-souled wives, mothers, and sisters in the dwellings of our over-burdened labourers; women for whom the roof above them and the four walls which enclose their dear ones are the only world they care to know, the little paradise which they set their hearts on making pleasant, sunny, and fragrant for the husband who is out in the hot sun or the bitter cold, beneath the pelting of the rain or the snow or the sleet; who, poorly clad and shod, with his scanty fare of hard bread, and cold tea, is working away for the little home and the wife and babes, and who is

singing in his heart as he bethinks him of the warm welcome that awaits him when the long day is over; of the bright smile and the loving words that will be sure to greet him when he crosses the threshold of his own little Eden; of the cheerful fire in winter, and the humble meal made so delicious by the love that prepares it, and the sweet words that season it; of the rest and security and the peace which force the overflowing heart of the husband and father and brother to think and to say that there is no spot of earth so dear and so blessed as the little sanctuary built up and adorned and made full of song by a true woman's heart.

O woman, woman! if you only knew how much you have it in your power to do—with His assistance who can never fail us when we do our best—to make true men of the husband of your choice, of the sons whom God has given you as his most precious treasures; true women, in their turn, of the little girls who are growing up at your knee—to be, when you are gone to your reward, mothers blessed and praised by all who know them.

We have just spoken of the divine assistance, which never fails the soul striving earnestly to fulfil important duties and to do all the good she can. Think of the contract God entered into with you when you entered into the married state and received at the hands of the Church the nuptial blessing. You were told that the matrimonial union had its model in the union of Christ with his Church, that his great love for her, which brought Him to the cross, and binds Him to be present on our altars to the end of time, is the type of the great and self-

devoting love which husband and wife should ever have for each other. Did you ever reflect that when you put your hand in your husband's hand before the Church, giving him your heart and your life thenceforward, that God, who is ever by the side of those who believe and trust in Him, promised you a mighty wealth of grace to be all your own till death, enabling you to love your husband more and more daily, with a deeper and a holier love, to make your own life like that of the Church towards her Crucified Love, one perpetual act of devotion and self-sacrifice, giving him in his every need your own strong love to sustain, and comfort, and strengthen him, taking up his cross courageously, and cheering him to labour and to suffer, because you both know, or ought to know, *that God is ever with you.*

Were your lot cast and your home built in a treeless plain amid a dry and barren country, how you would thank the man who would dig for you at your very door a well so deep and so unfailing that its cool and sweet waters would ever flow forth, winter and summer, for yourself and your dear ones! And yet the great graces attached by Christ to the worthy reception of the divine sacrament of matrimony, form within your home, wherever you chance to be, a well of water for the soul's health and strength so divinely prepared, that no length of time can exhaust it. Why do you not drink of the waters of your own well?

We have just said how much the true woman has it in her power to do—no matter how poor her home or hard her husband's lot—if she only knew both the extent of her power to cheer his lot and the sacredness of the obligation which binds her to do it.

We now appeal to the experience and generosity of the wife, mother, and sister of the labouring man. There was a rapid sketch above of the comforts and delights of the poor hard-working man's home, when love and devotion were toiling to prepare a sweet rest for him when the day's work was ended.

DARK AND CHEERLESS HOMES.

But have we seriously thought of the number of homes made dark, and cheerless, and desolate, and hateful to the husband, the brother, the son, and the daughter, too, by the absence of that bright spirit of love, which works at home from dawn till sunset, to have everything warm and pleasant and restful for the weary ones coming back after their eight and ten hours of labour?

If the devoted, God-fearing, sweet-tempered woman is rewarded by seeing her dear ones unhappy when kept away from the bright home she makes for them, and most happy when seated near the warm hearth and charmed with her smile and her voice, it is no less certain that the selfish, untidy, ill-tempered, and bitter-tongued woman succeeds in making home unbearable for everyone who is dependent on her.

Why is it that so many men—thrifty, hard-working, made to be and disposed to be devoted husbands and exemplary fathers—are driven at the end of their day of toil to find—not rest, indeed, nor recreation—in the neighbour's house—but some distraction from the thought of their own comfortless home, some rest from the din and lash of the ceaseless tongue which is their torment? Why are so many, at length, driven to the tavern to seek forgetfulness in intoxi-

cation? Is it not because woman forgets to be loving and devoted and ingenious in the sweet arts of making her fire burn brighter on the hearth, and her own person more attractive to her dear ones by some little ornament put on to welcome the labourers at evening, and her humble meal made more appetising by some of the many cheap seasonings that the poorest can buy, and her whole house shining with cleanliness, and filled with the sweet music of her own delighted tones? Ah! love has stores from which can be borrowed without stint, and at little cost, kind words and warm smiles and a thousand other things which go straight to the heart thirsting for the endearments, the joys, and the repose of home. Why will you not be a queen in your own little kingdom, O wife, O mother, O sister, and make all hearts subject to you by this ascendency of your goodness and devotion.

There are worse consequences still—especially in cities and manufacturing towns—which are caused by the want of the wifely and motherly qualities described above.

Young people of both sexes who are forced—perhaps from early boyhood or girlhood—to seek for employment outside of their home, feel an imperative need of the rest and comfort and love of their own fireside, when the end of their long day of toil has come. Blessed is the mother who knows how to make their home bright and warm for them! But what shall we say of her who cares not to do so? or who makes her home intolerable to her dear ones?

This much is certain, that in our overcrowded cities, if not elsewhere, thousands upon thousands of

hard-working young people are driven into dangerous company and corrupting amusements because they have no home to love, to be proud of, in which to find the repose of heart and body so needful for their age especially. There is in this a mine of suggestion for parents, for pastors, as well as for all persons to whom Providence has given the means and the will to prevent the ruin of our youth.

But far better than all explanations or dissertations may be the bright examples quoted in the next chapter. Before we come to these, however, let us complete the present subject matter by showing

HOW THE SELFISHNESS AND FOLLY OF A FASHIONABLE WOMAN CAN MAKE THE MOST MAGNIFICENT HOME INTOLERABLE.

We wish the reader to understand the term "fashionable woman" in the odious or objectionable sense in which it is taken by the sound judgment of people of the world. With "fashions," in so far as they are unobjectionable, and mark the changes in dress to which even the best and least worldly persons in society, men as well as women, have to conform, we do not mean to find fault; this would be foreign to our present purpose, and serve only to distract the reader unprofitably. It will be seen by a glance at what we have to say, that our censure addresses itself to an exceptional class of wealthy women whose number, unhappily, is increasing daily.

The home of the wealthiest, we take it, no matter how splendid outwardly, or how magnificent and luxurious within, can be at best but splendid misery,

where unselfish and devoted love does not preside over the household, provide for the comfort of every person there, and minister to their happiness by the bright cheerfulness without which the most gorgeous furniture has no lustre, and the electric warmth of affection, without which courtly manners are but a lifeless show.

Here is a man who has fought a hard battle with fortune, but has won it at last. Like true soldiers on every field, he has not cared, during his long struggle, for many comforts, luxury was beyond his reach. But now that fortune lavishes her favours on him he wishes to enjoy life in a home that shall be, he hopes, a paradise. Would that many of our most thrifty and fortunate men, though never so upright and honourable, would remember the old pagan superstition about exposing one's bliss to the eyes of the gods, or flaunting one's prosperity in the sunlight! The "loudest" wealth is never likely to yield unmixed or lasting felicity; this is better secured by quiet tastes, and the repose enjoyed in the shade, and with the select few.

But our fortunate man has built and furnished a home so comfortable that only a companion who can be devoted to him is wanting to complete it. He has been attracted by a handsome face, and a name without reproach. Perhaps, on his part, there has been none of that romantic feeling to which the superficial world gives the name of love; but there is in his choice the hearty purpose of finding one who will love him truly, and to whose happiness he wishes to devote his fortune and himself.

She is a woman, young, indeed, and stainless, but

selfish and vain; fond of dress, of admiration, of display, and who is anxious to wed a fortune large enough to permit her to gratify all her frivolous tastes. Her husband had the ambition to succeed in business—that ambition is now gratified; but he had other and nobler aims which he had to forego in the hard striving after wealth, and which now possess his soul. He would fain cultivate his mind, he would indulge his taste for such of the fine arts as make home beautiful, and home enjoyments more delightful. In the wife's family were several persons noted for their culture and scientific attainments: indeed, an accidental acquaintance with one of these had led to a first introduction to the woman whom he had made his bride, and in whom he hoped to find a perfect sympathy for the intellectual aspirations which served to brighten the future before him.

But the literary tastes and scientific pursuits of her relatives had been this woman's aversion from girlhood, and her husband was not slow in discovering that there was not one particle of intellectuality in her composition. Her honeymoon, instead of being spent in travelling, was taken up with an unbroken round of receptions and parties. Her powers of endurance, when the ball-room or the theatre were concerned, seemed to be unlimited; but, once in her privacy, she seemed never to think that her husband wished to enjoy her companionship, or that she was expected to converse with him, to play or sing for him, or to make a single effort at being his companion for a single hour. The afternoons were spent in the park, when her equipage had to outshine the richest, and her toilet was made to eclipse the most fashion-

able. The evenings, for the most part, were consumed in interminable sittings with her French maid, who decked her mistress out with incomparable art for the ball or the theatre. The bridegroom had hoped that this thirst for display and dissipation would be quenched by the unlimited indulgence of the first year of married life, and that, after this necessary infliction, he should have the quiet of his home and the sweet company of his young wife; besides, his health could not stand the serious disturbance caused in his regular habits by late hours, and this unnatural changing of day into night and night into day.

The second and third years of his matrimonial life found him disappointed, dispirited, and utterly miserable, with the certainty, moreover, of having bound himself for life to a woman who never could be a companion to him, who had neither head nor heart, nothing, in fine, to recommend her but a pretty face, like a painted mask covering an empty skull.

His beautiful home became intolerable to him, and there is no knowing what desperate or downward course the heart-broken man might have pursued if he had not been asked by one of his wife's relatives to accompany him on a scientific expedition. This offer kindled once more his purest ambition, and, after limiting, to a very generous amount, the monthly expenditure of his young wife, he was glad to escape from his home, and to seek knowledge and fame in the field of science.

She, meanwhile, had but one purpose in life, *to dress*. At the death of a distinguished fellow-citizen she literally spent three whole days and nights

visiting the most fashionable warehouses, and closeted with the most reputed milliners, to find out what style of hat and what dress she might wear at the funeral, so as to throw the whole of "Vanity Fair" into the shade.

When the spring-tide of that heartless beauty had passed away, it was already autumn for her. The complexion which was her only charm had been early ruined by the reckless and needless use of cosmetics, much more even than by her feverish life of enjoyment. No splendour of dress could conceal the fatal decay, and no depth of paint could mask it; and with the consciousness of this premature decline, her fretfulness and peevishness made her intercourse intolerable, unrelieved, as its dulness was, by a single mental accomplishment, or a solitary conversational grace.

The husband, on his return, sought relief from the dreariness of his home-life in the speculations of the stock-exchange, heeding little, if at all, the remonstrances of a wife he heartily despised. When last heard of, his name was mentioned as one of many ruined by some sudden fall in railroad stocks. His house and furniture passed out of his possession, and he was left alone with poverty, obscurity, and a wife without head, or heart, or even beauty.

CHAPTER IV.

HOW HUSBAND AND WIFE TOGETHER MAKE A HAPPY HOME.

In one of the exquisite books written by a contemporary author,* many examples and extracts are given, all tending to show how blissful is the condition of every family in which the principles of the Catholic religion are sedulously practised by parents and children. In the house of Count St. Elzear, the son of a saint and the husband of another, the tutor of a king, the governor and saviour of his kingdom, the gentle knight, the great-souled statesman, and skilful general, who died at twenty-eight, the idol and model of two nations, we have the perfect mirror of domestic government. It is not easy to say whether his wife, St. Delphine, and her saintly husband are more to be admired for the supernatural virtues which shone in their lives, or for the practical common sense which dictated the rules they established over their household, and over their princely domains.

But, though Elzear had been reared as a saint from infancy, and had scarcely emerged from boy-

* We mean Kenelm Digby. We here borrow from his *Compitum*, or the "Meeting of the Ways at the Catholic Church," book i., chapter iv.

hood when they were affianced and married, Delphine, who was by two years his elder (though only fifteen), became thenceforward the guiding and controlling spirit. Although entrusted, at so unripe an age, with the government of large estates in France and the kingdom of Naples, and finding himself at the head of so numerous a household, it was affirmed, by the unanimous testimony of his servants, retainers, and subjects, that not a sign of ill-temper or impatience ever betrayed a disposition naturally passionate and fierce.

His wife, who studied him so closely, wondered at this extraordinary mastery over self, and said to him one day: "What kind of a man are you, never to show anger or emotion when treated with insolence or seriously wronged? . . . Are you incapable of feeling resentment? What harm could it do to the wicked men who occasionally do you foul wrong, if you manifested a little indignation at their conduct?" "Why should I betray temper or give way to indignation, my dear Delphine?" was the reply. "Anger never serves any good purpose; nevertheless, I shall let you into a little secret of mine. Know, then, that often enough, when wronged in word or deed, I do feel my anger swell up within me; but I never fail to recall how our dear Lord was treated in his Passion, and say to myself, 'Even if thy servants did buffet thee and pluck thy beard, how much more outrageously was He treated!'" He died in 1323.

THE WRATHFUL HUSBAND TRANSFORMED BY PATIENCE.

In 1355, lived at Siena, in Italy, a nobleman, Giovanni (John) Colombino, who was quite the

opposite of St. Elzear. He was extremely irritable, and took no pains to master his temper. Coming home one day at his dinner hour, and finding that the meal was not ready, he flew into a furious passion, and began to upset and break the furniture in the dining-room. His wife, a holy woman, endeavoured to pacify him, and, while urging the servants to hurry forward their preparations, she argued sweetly with her husband on the unseemliness of such displays of anger, and begged him to read a book while she would go to aid the cook. He flung the book away from him, and stalked back and forth in his rage, while the lady hastened to the kitchen.

Presently, however, he began to cool down and to feel heartily ashamed of his weakness; so, picking up the book, he began to read. It was the "Lives of the Saints," and in the mirror of their conduct he beheld the horrible deformity of his own life. From that hour there was a total change in Giovanni Colombino: he became the wonder of Sienna, died in odour of sanctity, and added one more name to the long roll of Christian heroes who owed, under Providence, their greatness and heroism to the irresistible influence of a saintly woman.

WHAT AN ANGELIC DAUGHTER AND SISTER DID.

In the year 186–, a family, composed of father and mother, with three children, came from afar to live in a quiet suburb of one of our great eastern cities. The father, Mr. S——, had been the heir to a considerable fortune, which he had first impaired by

mismanagement, and then completely lost by involving it all in unwise ventures. He had been induced to come to the East by the offer of employment as bookkeeper or accountant in a large shipping firm. He took possession of his modest little suburban house under peculiarly distressing circumstances. His wife, a woman of uncommon beauty and goodness, was in the last stage of consumption, and the fatal termination of the malady was hastened by the fatigues of a long journey, the bitter cold of an unusually severe autumn, and the material discomforts of her new home. The cottage which the family had rented was old, damp, had been for some years untenanted, and was but scantily furnished, and insufficiently warmed.

"I trust in you, Nora," gasped the dying mother, as she held the hand of the kneeling girl in one of her own, and with the other touched the bent golden head half in blessing and half caressingly, "and I know God will help you." The priest, who had just brought to that death-bed the Divine Pledge of the eternal possession, was standing near, deeply moved by all that he had seen of these interesting strangers. The simple enlightened faith and exalted piety of the mother, the angelic grace of the eldest daughter, and the helpless, hopeless expression of the poor father, as he supported the younger child—fragile, fair-haired, and dazzlingly beautiful, but with consumption written on her wan cheek and wasted form —all that went to his heart, and kept him there till the divine messenger—Death—had performed his errand. An only son, a lad of eighteen, apprenticed to a civil engineer, was absent, and could only reach

the house of mourning as they were about to set out for the church and the cemetery.

When the priest, with moist eyes, summoned courage to say to the remaining parent and his offspring that all was over, and that one more saintly soul had gone to her rest and reward, Nora, startled by an exclamation from her father, turned round to see her sister apparently lifeless in his arms. "Oh my darling, my darling!" she said, as she raised the rigid form, and covered its face with her tears and kisses; "you must not leave me now! Oh! God will not take you from me! . . ."

The priest, with a few earnest words of sympathy in the father's ear, hastened away when the fainting girl revived, promising to return soon and obtain for these afflicted ones all the aid they needed in their bereavement.

A few weeks deepened immeasurably the gloom which had fallen on that now motherless household. Mr. S——, naturally irritable, had become intolerably peevish in consequence of his many disappointments. His temper had sorely tried his sick wife, and after her death it proved a source of continual suffering to her children. The boy, William, was seldom at home, and so escaped these domestic discomforts; but poor Nora, and her little suffering Fanny, were made to feel their bitterness daily, and almost hourly.

For, to add to the pinching poverty they were enduring, their father lost his place of accountant. His haughty manner, which misfortune had not softened, his censorious and prying disposition, which a certain scrupulosity had only made more trouble-

some and intolerable to others, gave offence to every subordinate in the office. He also took it on himself to lecture his employers on certain transactions with the custom-house which excited his suspicion. Just as December was beginning to tax to the utmost Nora's resources in housekeeping her father was dismissed.

This was terrible news for the poor child of fifteen, who knew not where to look for the means of keeping a roof above them in a season rendered exceptionally severe by intense cold, and the great dearth of all things. She was a stranger, too, in the city and their immediate neighbourhood, and to no human being, not even to her confessor, had she breathed a word of the utter destitution which had fallen on them.

With the tidings of her father's dismissal a new enemy to her peace appeared. She had, strange as it may seem, never known by any experience of hers what drunkenness was, had never seen an intoxicated person. What was her horror and dismay to behold her dear parent in that condition! Hitherto she only had eyes for his virtues; in the light of her perfect innocence and sinlessness his imperfections had been overlooked, or viewed only as the shadows inseparable from the bright sides of his character.

It was a fearful revelation to the care-burdened girl. But her womanly instinct and true nobleness of nature impelled her, even when this first manifestation of infirmity was renewed again and again, only to treat him whom she loved and reverenced so singularly, with the tenderness, the respect, the

delicacy due to a sick and helpless father. She hid him away from every eye, even from those of her young sister, who was encouraged to believe that the change she could not but remark was due to grief and exhaustion. Nora spent hours of the night in prayer, when all was still in her cottage, bedewing with her tears her mother's crucifix, and conversing with the court of heaven, as if the veil had been withdrawn, and she were permitted to plead for her dear ones at the Mercy Seat, and face to face with the Divine Majesty.

From that Presence she always arose overflowing with comfort, with peace, and light, and strength, and the morning ever found her armed with increased courage for the struggle before her. It had been the invariable custom of her parents to perform together their night and morning devotions. Nora, by a happy inspiration, took her mother's place by his side from the beginning of his bereavement, and to his unspeakable satisfaction. Even when half stupefied by drink, he would be persuaded to kneel with her, and lift his soul to God: the morning never failed to find him humiliated, conscience-stricken, and self-accusing, but irritable and despondent. She never uttered one word of reproach, or so much as hinted, in their conversation, at the growing habit which filled her with undefinable terror and foreboding.

One night he returned late, she knew not whence, and, unable as he was to say his night prayers, had lain down half-undressed on his bed, his angel-daughter watching wearily near the half-opened door of his chamber. On awaking, he was struck to the

heart with sorrow, and when his pale and hollow-eyed child made her appearance, he cast himself on her neck in a mute agony of tears. She kissed him, soothed him, lavished on him words of love and comfort, such as God puts on the lips of the pure and brave-hearted. At length, "O Nora," he said, "this must be no more!" and, kneeling by her side, they both prayed in silence. God heard their united prayers. That trial was thenceforth spared to Nora.

Another blessing, a few days afterwards, rewarded her filial piety. She wrote to her father's late employers, soliciting an interview, and received a favourable answer. Recommending, as was her wont in every serious undertaking, the success of her visit to the Father of the orphan and afflicted, she presented herself at the office, surprised and charmed the chief partner with her beauty, her artless simplicity, the rare culture in one so young displayed during the interview, and especially by the eloquence with which she pleaded and won her father's case. Mr. S—— was given an occupation more suitable to his years and antecedents, and the daughter was delicately told of his former unpopularity and its causes.

These, with all a woman's tact, Nora set about correcting, and, wonderful to relate, in good time she succeeded in effecting a great change in her father's temper, his bearing towards his associates in business hours, and his disposition to fault-finding. The humiliation which the old gentleman felt at his late weakness made him as docile as a child to his daughter's training. And so Nora was left free to devote herself to her sick sister, and to a long and

earnest correspondence with her brother, whose duties compelled him to long absences, and whose health, as well as conduct, began to cause her watchful heart no little alarm.

Fanny's constitutional debility had suffered much from the long journey the family had recently made to their new abode, as well as from her mother's death, and the loss of many luxuries and comforts the child had till then been accustomed to. About Christmas-tide the physician pronounced her case one of chronic spine-disease, but the sweet sufferer was not allowed to know of it. She seemed, however to brighten, revive, and gain strength under the warm sunlight of her sister's love, and the tender nursing of that gentle and cunning hand. But just then Mr. S—— caught cold, and the illness soon assumed the form of a violent pleurisy, leaving little hopes of recovery, as the new year dawned on them.

When the priest was summoned hurriedly on the evening of the great feast of Christmas, his impression on entering the cottage was, as he afterwards declared, one of reverential awe, for a something heavenly seemed to pervade the atmosphere which filled it. The door was opened by Fanny, looking, in her simple dress of black, and with her dazzling complexion, like an angel just descended to tarry a brief space with the mourners. The whole house was decorated with evergreens and artificial flowers, but a refined taste had presided at the decoration, and was evident in the few simple ornaments of the mantel-piece, in the exquisite neatness of the sick-chamber, and in the preparation of the temporary altar for the Sacrament. The patient was in a deep

slumber when the priest entered. Nora was kneeling by his side, her hand held in her parent's with so tight a grasp that she could not or dared not withdraw it without interrupting the repose which powerful narcotics had procured him.

As she turned her head to greet the priest, he was struck with the rapt look of gratitude for his coming, and of adoration for the Gift of which he was the bearer. The poor slumberer soon awoke, and his spirit was prepared for the reception of the divine and awful graces ordained for the Christian's death-struggle by Him who is the Author and Finisher of our faith. Nora moved about the sick-room like some one of the virgin train who evermore accompany the Lamb, and her sister knelt at the foot of the bed, silently pouring forth her tears and prayers. When Holy Viaticum had been administered, and the last benediction given, the elder spoke to the priest with an air of quiet but preternatural fortitude. She knew what was coming, and trusted in the Comforter for strength to sustain her.

Both on quitting and entering the cottage the priest had remarked that there was only fire in the sick-room; his previous inquiries about the circumstances of the family had elicited from the neighbours information enough to make him feel certain that Nora had to contend with great distress. From herself he could obtain no answer to his timid and indirect questions. But it so happened that Mr. S——'s employer, hearing of his serious illness, called, with his eldest son, on the priest, and begged the latter to accompany them to the cottage. It was a timely visit: a glance satisfied the merchant of the

urgent want of relief. The cottage was his property; he resolved at once on making it most comfortable; and, besides, begged Nora to draw at once her father's full year's salary, which was trebled without her knowledge. The most skilful medical aid was also secured, and a lively interest was created by the good priest's frequent praise of these afflicted strangers.

William hastened to his father's sick-bed, travelling night and day from the upper Mississippi, where he and his patron were superintending the building of a bridge. Whether he had inherited his mother's constitutional weakness, or his frame was not proof against the fatigue of so long a journey, and the discomforts and privations from which his very slender purse could not purchase an exemption, he reached the house of death only to be prostrated with fever. His father died a few hours after his son's arrival, and the good priest who had been the former's consoler in his last hours was called in to minister to the latter, before his parent had been borne to the cemetery and laid beside his wife.

Nora, with a woman's fortitude, bore up against this new trial, and God, who has stored up in a woman's heart such treasures of love and enduring devotion, enabled this tender girl, exhausted as she was by the grief and labours of all these weary months, to be for her brother all she had been for both her parents. There were no Sisters of Charity at hand; but the merchant's wife, a Protestant lady of rare goodness, had visited Nora under her new affliction, and insisted on remaining with her for a few days. The principal Catholic ladies, also,

touched by what they heard, came to sympathise and to admire; and to see the lovely orphans was to become attached to them. But Nora would devolve on no one her duties towards her sick brother, on whom both she and Fanny now centred their entire affection.

Their brother was saved. And now, why delay the reader? William's convalescence was a long and painful one. He had inherited his father's peevishness, and had apparently lost, in his somewhat wandering life as civil engineer, every trace of the early piety inculcated by his mother. People wondered that such an unamiable and God-abandoned youth could have come of the same parentage as the two angelic beings whom he called sisters.

Nora, while he was slowly recovering his strength, had been casting about for some occupation which might enable her to maintain the two now entirely thrown on her care. The merchant's wife continued to be devoted to the orphans, and had occasionally brought her son to visit William during the latter's convalescence. When able to bear exercise in the open air, the two young men drove out together, and so an intimacy gradually sprang up between the two families. It was remarked, not without wonder, that under Nora's influence William became gradually transformed into another man. But few traces of his petulance and irritability remained. Indeed, after the first weeks of his recovery, the frequent oaths which startled the echoes of that quiet abode were heard no more, and the old habit of night and morning prayer was resumed, William, from his bed or his arm-chair, heartily joining in his sister's

devotions. A new moral sense seemed to be growing up in him, refining, not only his language, but his very features; so that before spring had passed into summer the neighbours, who at first could see but a slight resemblance between the sisters and their coarse and burly brother, were struck with the remarkable likeness he bore them in features and expression.

It was not all: the merchant's son had seen too much of Nora not to have been charmed with her beauty of soul, much more even than with her graces of person. His mother shared his admiration of such extraordinary worth, nor was his father indifferent to the virtues which he had himself more than once warmly eulogised. Nora, after imploring the divine guidance, and consulting the priest who had been her counsellor and benefactor, listened favourably to the young merchant's suit, and accepted gratefully his mother for her own. When the days of mourning were ended, just as another spring was spreading her fairest charms over earth and sky, she became the wife of this lover, having her sweet Fanny with her as the angel of her home. They are both, at this day, the models of Christian mothers and maidens in another land, whither the young husband's extensive business forced him to transfer his residence; they are the idols of the young and the worshipped benefactresses of the poor and suffering, blessed in hundreds of homes to which they bring light and comfort, prized in their own above all earthly treasures, and more and more reverenced by those who daily and hourly witness their goodness and humility.

CHAPTER V.

THE WIFE IN THE CHRISTIAN HOME.

THE Church, among her solemn benedictions, had one for every dwelling-house, being the same for that of the poorest man and for that of the wealthiest, for the lowliest cottier on his little plot of ground, as well as for the royal palace. Just as she lovingly blessed and guarded near her temples the bodies of her children, without distinction of rank, even so she was desirous of hallowing by her prayers every spot in city or in country where her dear ones were born and reared, and where she would have God's angels live with them as their unseen guardians, companions, and helpers.

"We send up our supplications to Thee, O God, the Almighty Father" (one form of blessing begins), "in behalf of this dwelling, of all who live therein, and of all things within it; praying that Thou do bless and sanctify it, and fill it with all good things. Grant them, O Lord, plenty from out the dew of heaven, the sustenance of life from out the fat of the earth, and fulfil their desires in thy mercy. On our entering this house, therefore, do Thou deign to bless and sanctify this abode as Thou didst vouchsafe to bless the house of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob; and

within these walls let the angels who behold thy light abide, to guard this home and its inmates."

Another ancient benediction added: "Abide ye in peace in your home: may the Lord grant you rest, and peace, and comfort, from all your enemies round about! May He bless you from his throne on high, as you rest or walk, sleeping or waking; and may your family flourish to the third and fourth generation!" Elsewhere the Roman Ritual says, in another form of blessing: "Bless, O Lord, God Almighty, this house, that in it may abide health, chastity, victory, fortitude, humility, goodness, and meekness, the fulness of the law, and thanksgiving towards God the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost."

In the design of God's fatherly providence, as well as in the intention of the Church, the Christian family-home is a place "blessed and sanctified," over which, with its inmates, angels keep watch and ward. This divine protection and angelic watchfulness secure "peace" and safety from all surrounding dangers; the blessing is fruitful in "health" of body and soul, in that purity of life which renders the inhabitants of the home worthy of being the fellow-servants and citizens of the angels, in victory over self, in that fortitude which ever strengthens man to bear and to forbear, in that humility which keeps us like little children in presence of the Divine Majesty, in "goodness and meekness," in the loving accomplishment of the law which is only the expression of his will, and in devout gratitude towards that Trinity of Persons whose blissful society in the life to come is to be the completion and reward of the home-life, sanctified and made most happy by every duty fulfilled.

In thus setting forth the sanctity of the Christian home, and the exhalted nature of the duties and the virtues which should adorn it, we are only endeavouring to recall men's minds to the venerable ideals so dear to our fathers, and to those "ancient paths" from which modern free-thinking would lead the young generation to stray.

ANGELS GUARD THE CATHOLIC HOME.

It is for every father, who is, by the divine law of nature, king in his own family, to consider well the truth here presented to him, and to conceive of his own little kingdom the pure and lofty notion, which is that of the divine mind as well as the mind of the Church. When a father, though never so poor, firmly believes that his little home and his hearthstone are a thing so precious and so holy that God will have "his angel keep, cherish, protect, visit, and defend it, and all who dwell therein," he, too, will lift up his eyes and his heart to that Father over all and most loving Master, and exert himself daily and hourly "to walk before Him and be perfect."

But it is to his companion, the queen of that little kingdom, the wife, that it is most necessary to have high and holy thoughts about the sacredness of her charge, the obligations incumbent on her, the incalculable good which she can do, and the many powerful helps towards its accomplishment that the All-Wise and Ever-Present is sure to multiply under her hand.

To every true man and woman now living there is no being on earth looked up to with so pure, so deep, so grateful, so lasting a love, as a mother.

Let us look at our mother, then, in that dear and holy relation of wife which she bears to him who was for us in childhood the representative of the God "of whom all paternity in heaven and earth is named."

WOMAN'S DUTIES AS WIFE.

The first duty of the wife is to study to be, in every way she can, the companion, the help, and the friend of her husband. Indeed, on her capacity to be all this, and her earnest fulfilment of this threefold function, depends all the happiness of both their lives, as well as the well-being of the whole family. Hence the obligation which is incumbent on parents providing for the establishment of their children, to see to it, so far as is possible, that the person chosen to be a wife in the new home should be a true companion for their son, a true helpmate in all his toil, and a faithful friend through all the changes of fortune.

SHE OUGHT TO BE A COMPANION TO HER HUSBAND.

One half of the unhappiness of married life comes from the fact that the wife is either unfitted or unwilling to be a true companion to her husband. This companionship requires that she should be suited, by her qualities of mind, and heart, and temper, to enter into her husband's thoughts, and tastes, and amusements, so as to make him find in her company and conversation a perfect contentment and delight.

Persons who are perfectly companionable never weary of each other; indeed, they are never perfectly

happy while away from each other; they enter into each other's thoughts, reflect (and increase by the reflection) the light in each other's mind; cultivate the same tastes, pursue the same ideals, and complete each other in the interchange of original or acquired knowledge.

But there is more than that in the companionship of the true wife. She studies to make herself agreeable, delightful, and even indispensable to him who is her choice among all men. If true love be in her heart it will suggest to her, day by day, a thousand new devices for charming the leisure of her husband.

Woman has been endowed by the Creator with a marvellous fertility in this respect; it is an unlimited power, productive of infinite good when used for a holy purpose, and within her own kingdom; but productive of infinite evil when employed in opposition to the design of the Giver, or allowed to lie idle when it should be used to promote the sacred ends of domestic felicity.

There are wives who will study certain languages, sciences, arts, or accomplishments, in order to make themselves the companions of the men they love, and thus be able to converse with them on the things they love most, or to charm the hours of home repose by music and song. The writer of these lines remembers that, while a young priest in Quebec, upwards of thirty years ago, he was much struck by seeing a young lady of one of the best families there, applying herself assiduously to study the sign-language of the deaf-mutes, in order to converse easily with her husband, a wealthy young merchant, thoroughly trained himself in the admirable Deaf

and Dumb Institution of his native city. They were devoted to each other, and the young wife's earnestness in making herself companionable to her husband, must have brought many a blessing on the home in which the writer beheld them so wrapt in each other, so virtuous, and so full of bright hope!

It must not be concluded from this, that a woman who applies herself to acquire knowledge for the purpose of being more of a companion to her husband, should thoroughly master either a language, a science, or an art. . . . In the case of the young wife just mentioned, a thorough familiarity with the language of signs was indispensable as a means of easy conversation with her husband. But this is evidently an exceptional case, and is only mentioned to show what difficulties love will overcome to be helpful or agreeable to its companion.

The word helpful, just used, will furnish to every wife the true measure of the knowledge she may be prompted to acquire. Her husband has to know perfectly whatever he knows, because his success as a professional man, or a business man, depends on this thorough knowledge, whereas his wife only acquires to please and to help her companion.

But there are other things besides this scientific, literary, or artistic knowledge, which may be more needful to a wife, if she would make herself of all earthly beings the most delightful and necessary companion to her husband. She must study him, his needs, his moods, his weak as well as his strong points, and know how to make him forget himself when he is moody and selfish, and bring out every joyous side of his nature when he is prone to sadness.

God, who has made the soul both of man and of woman, and who has united them in the duties and burdens of home-life, wills that they should complete each other. Man has bodily strength, because it is his duty to labour for the home and protect it; he has also certain mental and moral qualities which woman does not need, and which fit him for the battle of life and his continual struggle with the crowd; but she has, on her part far more of fortitude, of that power to bear and to forbear, to suffer silently and uncomplainingly herself while ministering, with aching heart and head, to the comfort, the cheerfulness, the happiness of all around her.

At any rate, she has by nature the power, the art, and the disposition to please, to soothe, to charm, and to captivate. It is a wonderful power, and we see, daily, women exerting it in a wonderful way, and for purposes that God cannot bless, and that every right conscience must condemn. Why will not women who are truly good, or who sincerely strive to be so, not make it the chief study of their lives to find out and acquire the sovereign art of making their influence as healthful, as cheering, as blissful as the sunlight and the warmth are to their homes?

Let us give an example of what is meant here, and this illustration will suggest of itself many other applications. We all know—a mother more than anyone else—what a potent spell praise is in making children master whatever they are learning, and, what is far more difficult, acquire a mastery over themselves, both in repressing wrong inclinations, and in gaining the habits of the noblest virtues. A word of praise from a mother will stir the heart of

every well-born child—and few children are ill-born, that is, with radically bad dispositions—to the most extraordinary exertions, and fill the whole soul with delight, when that word is sweetly spoken of successful efforts made. We say nothing here of the stimulus which praise from the queen of the home gives to the zeal and conscientious labours of servants.

We are concerned with the master of the home. Do you not know that all men, even old men, even the proudest and coldest men, are only great children, who thirst for praise from a wife, a mother, or a sister's lips? There are men, and they are the noblest, the most high-souled, who care but little, if anything, for the praise or censure of the crowd, even of the learned or titled crowd; but their heart is stirred through all its depths by one sweet word from the lips of mother, sister, or wife. Why, O women, are you so niggard of a money which you can bestow without making yourselves the poorer, and which your dear ones prize above gold and gems?

Give generously, but discerningly, what is held so dear as coming from you, and which will only encourage those you love above all the world to strive to-morrow for still higher excellence, and look forward to still sweeter praise.

THE WIFE AS HELPMATE IN THE HOME.

In the earthly paradise of the true Christian home the wife is a helpmate, the equal of her husband, neither his inferior nor his servant. It is not in such homes that our modern theories or discussions about

"Woman's Rights," or "The Sphere of Woman," have originated. No woman animated by the spirit of her baptism, filled with the humility and generosity which are the soul of that self-sacrificing love indispensable to husband and wife in the performance of their undivided life-labour, ever fancied that she had or could have any other sphere of duty or activity than that home which is her domain, her garden, her paradise, her world. There, if she is truly a wife, all are subject to her, even her husband. There never existed a true-souled Christian man who did not believe himself and demean himself from his bridal hour till his dying day like a willing and loving servant of his wife inside his own home.

This is true, especially of the home of the wealthy and the great, where reigns, and should ever reign, the infinite respect and reverence of man for woman, in whom Christian faith bids us see the majesty and purity of her who is Mother of Christ. There is no excuse for the high-born and the wealthy, when they fail to honour themselves by doing service inside their homes to mother, wife, and sister. The difficulty will here be with the poor man, the labouring man, coming home at evening, worn out by the toil of the day, faint with hunger, too, and fearful, it may be, of the morrow. Has he not to be served rather than serve?

The answer is an easy one, and easily understood, where minds are enlightened and hearts are upright. If the poor man's wife has done her duty throughout the day, she will have found in her home-work enough to weary. The very labour of preparing for her husband and her sons, perhaps, the meal which

is to restore their strength, and the care required to brighten up that home so as to make it look a paradise of repose for them, is the task of her who is the natural helper in the household, and whose blessed help consists precisely in making the home what it ought to be—man's heart-rest from all outside cares.

But that is enough about the fundamental notion of equality between husband and wife, the father and the mother in the Christian family. Both are necessary to each other; they ought to have but one heart and one mind in the pursuit of the one great purpose of their lives—the happiness of their home and the rearing to the practice of all goodness the children whom God sends them. Understanding this, their only true position towards each other, the husband never can entertain any notion of domineering over his wife, nor the wife feel any sense of servile inferiority towards her husband.

But the love which binds her to him is an enlightened love, which makes her view their respective labours as only two distinct parts of one task. Besides all that she accomplishes in ordering, brightening, and warming the home, there are a thousand ways in which she can be a helpmate to her husband, beyond what is required for mere companionship.

For it is one thing to be delightful company to a person one is travelling with, by being able to converse with him in his own language, or to discuss with him every favourite topic, or to enter into his recreations and amusements with zest, and thus to lighten the weariness of the road and charm away its dulness, and another to be a helper. One's companion may fail in strength, or be beset with dangers

and difficulties, and then it is that the office of the helper begins.

It is precisely when man's heart fails him, and his courage yields to disappointment or difficulty, that woman comes to his aid. And if this help is most sweet and welcome and above all price in moments of professional weariness, of business difficulties, or when all seems dark, and bleak, and hopeless to the stoutest heart, how much more valuable is it in matters which concern the soul's welfare, in troubles of the heart, in the dark and stormy hours of temptation!

But we must not trench on the next and dearest function of wifely love—that of being the truest and most faithful of friends.

THE WIFE AS HER HUSBAND'S FRIEND.

A story, very apposite to our purpose, is told by a writer of the middle ages. A man wished to make a visit to Cologne, famed at that time as a pilgrimage, possessing, as it did, the tomb of the Three Wise Kings. He was a wealthy man but not a wise one. He had an admirable wife, whose worth he knew not, and whose company he neglected for that of two neighbours, who played friends with him because he was rich and lavish of his money. As he was setting out on his pilgrimage he asked his friends what he should bring them from Cologne. One answered that he would like a rich cloak, and the other begged him to buy a tunic of rare stuff. He next asked his wife what he should get for her, and she besought him to bring back sense and

wisdom, which might enable him to see and correct the evil of his ways.

After having paid his devotions at the shrine of the Three Kings, he went among the merchants, bought the cloak and the tunic, but sought in vain for someone who would sell him sense and wisdom. They were not to be found in the market. As he returned crestfallen to his inn, the host inquired why he seemed downcast, and, learning the cause, advised him, on his return home, to pretend to his friends that he had lost all his money and could give them neither cloak nor tunic. He followed this piece of advice, and both of the false friends turned him out of doors, abusing him as a fool and a vagabond.

Not so his wife, however: he told her the story of his loss; but she, seeing that he was weary from the road, and filled with sorrow and indignation because of this ill-treatment, tenderly embraced him, consoled and refreshed him, assured him that God would send him heavenly treasures for the money he had lost. So his eyes were opened to know what wealth he possessed in her true love and faithful friendship; and thus did he "find sense and wisdom from having visited the City of the Three Kings."*

"What is friendship?" asks Alcuin, and he answers forthwith, "A similitude of souls." Where the wife labours conscientiously to be a true companion to her husband, there is little fear but she will also become a true, faithful, and constant friend; for the successful effort made to establish perfect companionship must end in effecting that "similitude

* Joannes, *Magnum Speculum*, 12.

of souls" which constitutes the essence and ground of friendship.

The reasons which will urge every right-minded and true-hearted woman to be the most delightful and constant of companions, and the most devoted of helpmates, must also inspire her with the resolution of being the most cherished of friends. She must not be jealous of the men for whom her husband entertains feelings of real friendship. On the contrary, it were wise to vie with him in showing them every mark of regard, as if she were thereby the interpreter of his dearest wishes. Nothing pleases a man more than to see his old and true friends warmly acknowledged and treated with all honour and affection by the persons most dear to him.

This, however, is only a passing admonition to which every woman who is careful of her home-duties will do well to attend. It is not only virtue, but good policy in a wife to have the sincere good-will and respect of all who consider themselves to be her husband's friends. Not only will they contribute much to the pleasantness of the home in which they are always welcome and honoured guests, but they will not fail to spread far and wide the fame of its hospitality, and the good name of its mistress.

It happens but too often that women will take it into their heads to regard the friends of their husband as persons who steal away a heart which should exclusively belong to themselves, and through an unwise and narrow jealousy make themselves odious, and their homes intolerable to men whom they ought to conciliate and to bind to themselves. More than one wife has lost for ever the heart of her

husband, and destroyed the peace of her fireside by such insane conduct.

Let the young and the wise take warning therefrom, and learn betimes how a true wife can be the counsellor, the guide, as well as the sanctifier and saviour of her husband. And here let a practical example dispense us from pursuing the subject further.

CHAPTER VI.

DUTIES OF THE WIFE AS THE DISPENSER OF THE HOME TREASURES.

NOTHING so animates the head of a family to honourable exertion as the certainty that his wife bestows her utmost care in providing for the comfort of his home, in dispensing wisely the store which he places at her disposal; making it her rule to be just to him by never exceeding his means when she cannot increase them by her industry; in being just to her children, by supplying them with becoming raiment, food, and instruction; just to her servants, whom she treats with a motherly tenderness which never condescends to familiarity; and just to God's poor, whose claims she holds to be most sacred.

But let us proceed understandingly. The first care of the wife is to establish discipline and order: discipline, without which there may be much noise and agitation, but no work done; and order, because where there is confusion everything is out of place, or done out of its proper time. To have discipline, where there are children and servants, the mistress must have authority, and she must assert and establish her authority by being both firm and calm, and giving everyone to understand that she means what she says, and what she says must be done.

Order means that every work must be done in its proper time, and everything in the house be put in its proper place. Order means economy both of time and of labour; for where every occupation has its own appointed time, the household duties are sure to be attended to, and to be fulfilled with singular ease and pleasure.

If this order and economy of time are necessary in large households, it is still more so in the home of the poor man, where everything has to be done single-handed by the wife. There are poor households—those of the daily labourer, the poor tradesman—where the wife, with a large family of children to care for, will quietly get through an amount of work of different kinds that would seem to require the joint energy of several persons. Go into these bright and orderly homes, where the housewife rests not from early dawn till long after sunset of the longest day, and see the cleanliness, the tidiness, the calm, and the contentment that fill the place like an atmosphere!

Of course, there will be comfort for all where there is such order; for there can be comfort with poverty, or, at least, with little, though never with want. There will be comfort for the husband when he returns to that bright, warm, pleasant hearth, where the deep love of his companion fills the house with a spiritual fragrance more pleasant than all the flowers of spring; there will be comfort at the simple meal set on the board shining with cleanliness; and there will be comfort in the sweet conversation in which the outside world is forgotten, in the joy of being all in all to each other; and there will be bliss in the

night's rest won by hard and hearty toil, and undisturbed by peevish ambition, or by the dreams of a spirit at war with God or the neighbour.

There will be loveliness, too, in the home where true love causes order and comfort to reign; for the poorest room can be made lovely by a woman's cunning hand. She can have flowers at her window, and flowers on her mantel and her table; and the curtains of windows and beds may be beautified by some simple ornament devised by a woman's taste, and executed in spare moments by the hand of even the busiest.

There is not one among the readers of this book but has seen such homes—albeit lowly, narrow, and poor, in the literal sense—in which this order, comfort, and loveliness gave the beholder the evidence of a womanly spirit that might have graced a palace. This remark, however, is only preliminary to what pertains to the wife's stewardship in her home.

MAN, IN EVERY CONDITION, RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS STEWARDSHIP.

We must not, especially in an age which tends daily more and more to deny that man owes any account to God for the use of the wealth he chances to possess—whether that be inherited from his ancestors, or obtained by his own thrift and industry—be carried away by the torrent of error. No matter whence derived, all that man has, as well as all that he is, belongs to God, his Creator, and Lord, and Judge; and to Him must he return to give an account of the use which he will have made of his

being, his life, his time, his property. Reason, even without the light of supernatural revelation, teaches this truth as fundamental and unquestionable.

The great and the rich will have to account for their stewardship, for the uses to which they have put their time, their riches, their power, their influence, their opportunities, just as the labouring poor will have to account for their thrift, and the awful uses to which one may see, day by day, our hard-working heads of families put their earnings, in drunkenness, gambling, and all manner of vice.

But, as we have said, it is the province of the housewife to be, at home, a wise steward in the use of her husband's means, while his chief business is, outside of the home, to procure these means by honourable industry. Both are responsible to God. The wife's immediate responsibility, however, is towards her husband. She is his minister, his eye, his hand, his head, and heart, in applying his wealth or the produce of his industry to the ends for which God wills it to be employed.

THE STEWARDSHIP OF THE WEALTHY WIFE.

Of persons of royal, princely, or noble rank, we do not think it necessary to treat in this place. We speak of wealth, wheresoever it exists, and of the duties and responsibilities of the wife in its home uses.

Hers should be a wise economy. Wisdom consists in a clear perception of the ends or uses for which money is to serve, and in the careful adaptation of one's means to one's expenditure. You have so much and no more to spend each week, or each

month, or each year; you have so many wants to provide for: let your wisdom be proved by always restraining your outlay so as to have a little balance left in your favour.

We know of a wife, a young wife, too, who, after her bridal, was made the mistress of a luxurious home, in which her fond husband allowed her unlimited control. They were more than wealthy, and his business relations and prospects were such as to promise certain and steady increase for the future. Still, the young wife did not allow herself to be lavish or extravagant. She provided generously for the comforts of her home, for the happiness of her servants, for the duties of a generous hospitality; she had an open hand for all charities and good works. But she was also, young as she was, mindful of the future, and this wise forethought is eminently the characteristic of women. Without ever whispering a word of her purpose to her husband, she resolved, from the beginning of their housekeeping, that she would lay by in a safe bank her weekly economies. The husband, in all likelihood, would have deemed this saving an ill omen, pointing to future calamity. It was, however, only the prophetic instinct of the wise woman who, in the heat of summer, and the overflowing plenty of autumn, looked forward to "the cold of snow," and made store for the need, and warmth, and comfort of her household.

The "calamity" came after a good many years; it came by a fatal chain of circumstances in which the misfortunes or dishonesty of others brought ruin on the upright, and prudent, and undeserving. One day

the husband came home with heavy heart, and tried in vain to hide his care from the penetrating eyes of love. He had to break to his wife the dreadful news of their utter ruin. She listened unmoved to his story: "All is not lost, my dear husband," she said; "I have been long preparing for this. If you will go to such a bank, you will find enough laid up there to secure us either against want or poverty."

In order to secure this wise and provident economy, even in the midst of wealth, two extremes must be avoided: parsimony, which destroys domestic comfort and makes the mistress of the proudest house despicable in the eyes of her cook, her butcher, and her grocer; and waste or extravagance, which is ruinous to the largest fortunes, and most criminal in the sight of God. "Waste not; want not," used to be inscribed on the huge bread-platters of our fathers, both in the servants' hall and the family dining-room. "Waste not; want not," ought to be the rule of every housewife in all departments of household economy. Waste is always a sin against God, against your husband and children, as well as against the poor, who have a right to what is thus thrown away; and, forget it not, waste never fails to lead to want, as surely as stripping a tree of its bark is followed by its pining away and withering.

Another rule, which a wise woman will never violate, is to tell her husband when she exceeds her means or allowance. It is fatal concealment to allow debts to accumulate without one's husband's knowledge; it tempts the woman, weak enough to do

so, to have recourse to most unworthy and most dangerous expedients, which are sure to be known in the end, and to lower the culprit or ruin her for ever in her husband's esteem. The equivocations, and the downright falsehoods, which are often used as means of concealment, cannot but be considered by every right-minded man as a greater calamity than the accumulation of the largest debt, or the loss of an entire fortune.

In this respect, as indeed in every other, no concealment will be found to be the wife's only true policy, and to secure this policy of no concealment let her make it the study of her life to have nothing to conceal.

THE WIFE THE DISPENSER OF HOSPITALITY.

To the wife's stewardship belongs also the discharge of a most important, not to say most sacred duty, that of hospitality. It is one of the chief functions of the divine virtue of charity. Of its nature, its necessity, and its importance, we do not wish to discourse here. Few are the homes and the hearts to which hospitality is a stranger. Those whom this book may reach will easily understand what the word means, without either definition or description. We can, therefore, convey our instruction by the simplest method.

Whoever is received into your home as a guest—precisely because he is your guest—forget everything else to make his stay delightful. It matters little whether persons thus hospitably received may or may not appreciate your generosity, your cordiality, and that true warmth of a welcome like yours, inspired

by Christian motives much more than by worldly reasons; it matters much for you that none should ever enter your home without finding it a true Christian home, or should leave it without taking away with them the pleasant memory of their stay, and a grateful recollection of you and yours. Doubtless, some will be found whom no courtesy, no kindness, no warmth of hospitality, can change from what they are, little-minded, narrow-hearted, selfish, cold, and unable to judge the conduct of others by any other standard than their own low thoughts and sentiments. They are only like bats entering a banquet-hall by one window, and passing out at the opposite, after having fluttered blindly about the lights, or clung for a few instants to the walls or the ceiling. Let them come and let them go. The social and spiritual atmosphere of the place is not for them

Nor must you complain of the number. It is wonderful how much place a large-hearted woman can find for her company, even in a very small house! A hospitable spirit can do wonders in its way: it can make the water on the board more delicious than the wines of Portugal, Spain, or France, or Italy; it can make the bread which it places before stranger or friend as sweet as the food of the gods; it can multiply its own scanty stores, as the Master did with the loaves in the wilderness; for God's blessing is with the hospitable soul to increase, to multiply, and to sweeten; to fill all who sit at her board with plenty, with joy, with thanksgiving.

HOW A NOBLE HUSBAND WAS SUSTAINED BY A DEVOTED WIFE WHILE PASSING THROUGH FINANCIAL DIFFICULTIES.

One family, in particular, will help to teach the reader that womanly excellence is no rare or recent flower on the soil of the New World. A young wife, born among the western valleys, and wedded to the man of her choice, had encouraged him in a chivalrous literary enterprise, which promised precious and plentiful fruit for the highest purposes of patriotism as well as religion. Their home had been blessed by six beautiful children, reared by the accomplished mother with inconceivable tenderness and care. It had been the delight of the grandparents to fill that home with every article of furniture and object of art which could make it, what it was in reality, a paradise for its inmates, as well as for a large and devoted circle of friends.

But the mind, the hand, and the heart of the happy young wife it was that gave to that home its bright look of refinement, of goodness, of perfect happiness.

One day, while she and her eldest daughter were wreathing some flowers round the frame of a favourite picture, the husband and father came in, and received from both the usual rapturous welcome. "Look, my dear," the proud little housewife exclaimed, after the first greeting, "look and see if anything can be more beautiful than this room! Had we our choice from the richest stores and the rarest collections of art, what could we add to all this? What dear object could we part with for a better?"

The fond husband's eyes glanced rapidly round the room; but they did not shine with the enthusiasm which fired his companion's. A cloud of a sudden settled on his brow, as if the question caused a pang in spite of the strong effort he made to repress his emotion. To his wife's enthusiastic queries he only answered by bending over her and kissing her in silence.

She divined that some misfortune had befallen or was impending; and he, who had ever since their wedding day found in her a trusty friend and most wise counsellor, now told her that the enterprise which had promised to be a most profitable as well as a most beneficial investment, had proved a most ruinous failure!

His friends, he said, had generously offered to come to his assistance and lend him all the money needed to meet his engagements. To cumber himself with this debt, or to sell his home and its costly furniture, was the only alternative left to them. He had not had courage to mention to her, till the last moment, the strait to which he was reduced, for he feared, and their friends feared, lest the parting with her beautiful home, and the loss of so many precious things should crush her.

"You cannot hesitate, dearest," was the quick reply; "we must part with everything rather than become dependent on others by being their debtors. You shall see how easy it will be to me to part with these treasures, provided I have a little home for you and our darlings, into which no creditor may intrude or pry. Am I not too rich and too happy with the wealth of love you and my children bring to me?"

There was not a moment lost; a little cottage was rented in another part of the city, and only the most needful articles of furniture were provided for parents, children, and servants; the busy hands of the young wife were never idle for several days beautifying the new home for the dear ones, who were kept, as well as friends and neighbours, in ignorance of the approaching change; and the little ones soon found themselves all of a sudden transported to the new nest!

Then, to the astonishment of all in the neighbourhood, and the regret of many, the auctioneer came, and piece after piece of the beautiful furniture—some of it made by the best upholsterers from the timber grown on the paternal estates far away—the objects of art and *virtù*, with which the young mother was wont to illustrate her lessons on the beautiful, given to the oldest children, and the dear piano, the gift of a fond mother, all were unhesitatingly sacrificed.

But what was the astonishment of friends and relatives when, after a few days of pity or wonderment, they called on the brave little woman in her new home, to find it so fair, so bright, so beautiful The carpets were plain, it is true, and the furniture was of the commonest kind; but chairs, and sofas, and ottomans had been covered with a chintz so pretty that no one stopped to inquire what was beneath the covering. There were white curtains to the windows, looped up with garlands of artificial flowers, and there were fragrant flowers on mantels and tables, and the little mistress was there with her face all aglow with happiness, with her sunny smile and merry laugh, and the warm, hospitable welcome for every friend and acquaintance; and there, too,

were the rosy children, as unconscious of any change of fortune as the happy guests of Aladdin's fairy palaces, who found in one suite of apartments objects so ravishing that they quite forgot what they had seen before. The little ones saw no change around them, save that the light of their mother's smile was even more sunny than ever, that she loaded their dear father with fond caresses, and called forth from his big heart louder bursts of joy and mirth, and that she had been busier than ever with her active hands and restless needle in transforming and beautifying the face of things in every room with the smallest possible expense.

The change of residence, as well as the circumstances which occasioned it, only served to raise both husband and wife in the esteem of the community, and to inspire their intimate friends with a warm admiration for their magnanimity. And so the happy nestful increased, and the husband rose higher in public confidence and in his noble profession, while his wife bestowed her whole care on the lovely children, whom she educated herself in every branch of learning, and in every accomplishment necessary or suitable to their position. It was no small labour; but she found it light, such was the order which she had established in her household, so sure was she of the devoted zeal of every one of her servants, and so delightful did she know how to make to her worshipping pupils every step in the most arid pathways of learning.

And yet the house was ever full of visitors. The numerous relatives belonging to both families were always expected to make their home with these good

young people while in town, and there were friends who could not resist the attraction they felt for a family which seemed to them the ideal of human felicity. Limited as was their income, neither the husband nor the wife ever bestowed a thought on the expenditure consequent on such unbounded and uninterrupted hospitality. The little wife managed to have a bountiful table at all times, never an extravagant one, and thus she never once allowed her household expenses to go beyond her means. What made her table, her drawing-room, the whole atmosphere of her home so full of an undefinable charm, was the love, the innocence, the paradisiacal purity and charity which parents and children shed around them.

The dinners were true feasts of love and joyousness, and the evenings in the drawing-room were festivals of song, in which mother and children had the chief part, but in which all guests who could play or sing were impelled to join by some powerful spell.

Those who had been privileged to share once or twice in this genuine hospitality, or who had been one or two evenings under the charm of that blissful family circle, would yearn to return.

THE WIFE AS THE FRIEND OF THE POOR.

We should have told how dear to the hearts of the poor, to the hearts, indeed, of all who were acquainted with misfortune and suffering in any shape, was the home into whose privacy we have been just glancing; for every heart and every hand within it were ever open to the needy. We may intersperse through these pages many gracious acts of goodness and true

charity originating with the queen of that blessed home, just as the silversmiths of old would detach pearls and other gems from an over-rich crown to adorn the vesture of royalty or religion. So pass we now to that dear function of home-life in the good old Catholic times.

And, connecting here hospitality towards the poor with almsgiving, let us see what was in that respect the spirit of the ages of faith. "Padua," Digby informs us, "had forty-five houses for the entertainment of poor strangers; in Venice all comers were entertained by many Doges; and, above all, say the old Italians, Vicenza was distinguished for its munificence towards needy strangers. At Venice, the senators who presided over the public administration were so hospitable that the whole city resembled a hotel for guests, and a common home for all strangers coming to it. At Cesena everyone used to dispute for the honour of receiving the stranger, till, to obviate such quarrels, the pillar was erected, having a ring for each noble family, so that to whichever the stranger on arriving fastened his horse, to that family was he to repair. '*Receive kindly whoever comes*,' says St. Francis in his rule—the spirit of which ruled many castles as well as cloisters—'*all, whether friend or foe, thief or robber*.' We read, indeed, of one proud castle standing near the road, over the portal of which the knight who built it, through the sole motive of vanity, caused lines to be inscribed . . . intending to signify that no one should be received but knights, philosophers, or clerks, or noble ladies; but the ancient legend states that, by a terrible vision, this knight was converted, and so delivered from his

former error that he resolved thenceforth to entertain rather the poor, effacing that inscription, and substituting for it words which signified that the naked and poor, the sick and infirm, and the exile and the pilgrim, would be thenceforth his guests."*

In Brittany a most beautiful custom still exists, in spite of modern legislation, which tends to forbid almsgiving of every kind, and to prevent the poor, even when they have a hovel of their own, from leaving it and making their dire need known to their neighbours. The day following marriage is "the day of the poor." They troop from every side to the door of the happy pair, and find tables spread for them in the vast hall of the nobleman, when the bridegroom is such, or on the greensward when he is of inferior degree. The tables for the men are set on one side, those for the women on the other; the bridegroom waiting on the former, and the bride attending to the comfort of those of her own sex. When they have had their fill, all dance together, and then take their leave, pouring blessings on their kind entertainers. Surely such blessings, and the heartfelt wishes and prayers of the poor, must be more profitable to young people entering on the married state and its doubtful fortunes, than the idle congratulations of a fashionable throng, and the selfish modern custom of hastening from the foot of the altar to the railway train, or steamboat, in order to escape from the irksome duty of receiving friends, or feasting the poor.

If from Brittany you cross, in imagination, the

* *Compitum*, b. i., c. vi.

broad expanse of sea which separates the westernmost shores of France from Spain, you will find among another proud and ancient race, the Basques, with a faith by no means less deep than that of the Bretons, Catholic notions about poverty and almsgiving, which are full of eloquent meaning. Land at any point of that rock-bound shore, in any one of the fishing towns and villages so famous all through Christian history, and you will see how the few native poor, in a country where nobody is ever seen idle, are treated with a sovereign respect and tenderness. A recent traveller,* landing at the little town of Elanchove, which clings, with its one street, to the almost perpendicular face of a mountain two thousand feet high, saw, as he toiled up that ladder-like street, "a poor old woman, all bent double with age, standing at a door and asking for alms. A charming young married woman, her mouth all wreathed with smiles, hastened to come out. I saw her take from her pocket a small brass coin, kiss it, and then give it to the old woman. The latter took the alms, made with it very devoutly the sign of the cross on herself, and then kissed it in her turn. Such is the custom throughout the Basque country, and does it not add a touching grace to charity?"

Such noble and touching customs as these are not, however, confined to Biscay or to Northern Spain; they are everywhere characteristic of the Spanish Catholic. The lofty spirit of self-respect, which is the soul of the Spaniard, is shown in the reverence with which he treats the poor, whom word or look of

* L. Louis-Lande, *Trois Mois de voyage dans le Pays Basque.*

his will never humble; but as his faith teaches him to consider Christ Himself present in the person of the beggar or of the sick man, his respect for them becomes downright and heartfelt veneration.

It will cheer and enlighten us to gather some of these choice pearls of Spanish custom to deck our own crown of merit withal. "Cheating and extortion seem incompatible with the Spanish character. Even the poorest peasant who has shown us our way, and who has walked a considerable distance to do so, has invariably refused to receive anything for his services; yet all are most willing and anxious to help strangers. The same liberal spirit seems to breathe through everything, and was equally shown at our little *posada* (inn) at Elche, . . . where a number of maimed, blind, and halt collected daily to receive the broken viands from the *table-d'hôte*, which the mistress distributed to them, and in the delicate blacksmith's wife opposite, who keeps two lamps burning nightly, at her own expense, before the little shrine of 'Our Lady of the Unprotected' in her balcony. The temporal works of mercy—to give bread to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty, to take care of the sick, to visit prisoners, and to bury the dead; these are the common duties which none shrink from."

"As I write, a handsome, dark-eyed, brown boy, in rags, who looks as if he had stepped out of one of Murillo's pictures, is leaning against the opposite wall in the moonlight, watching a shrine of the Virgin. It is a picture typical of Spain, ruined and superstitious, but still most beautiful; and so is the cry of the watchman, which is ringing through the silent

air, '*Ave, Maria Santissima!* it is a quarter to twelve o'clock!'"*

Ah! give us back this superstition, this living faith rather which built up Spain and Portugal, till they were the wonder of Christendom. The ruin of the Peninsula is coeval, step by step, with the decline of that glorious spirit of "superstition." But we can pardon this perversion of judgment in a Protestant who has the eyes to see and the heart to appreciate so much that is beautiful in Catholic customs.

It is well known, that from time immemorial the sovereigns of Spain visited the hospitals nearest to the royal residence once, at least, every year. The rule is to go there with the entire court. On entering the sick ward, royalty at once goes to the nearest bed, and humbly kisses the hand of the poor patient. Then sovereigns and courtiers wait on the sick, performing in their behalf the most menial services, and addressing the sufferers with as much reverence as if they beheld the God of Calvary or the Divine Babe of Bethlehem visibly present in every sick-bed.

THE LEPROUS INFANT CARED FOR BY ELIZABETH OF HUNGARY.

Is not this the significance of a most beautiful legend from the life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary? Her mother-in-law, Sophia, was, at the time of the occurrence about to be related, bitterly prejudiced against the saintly wife. "She neither shared nor approved Elizabeth's charities and merciful ministra-

* Hare: "Wanderings in Spain," v., pp. 83, 84.

tions: In her son, however, she found no sympathy. Yet one account shows how even his kind heart was overtasked. One day a child afflicted with leprosy was brought to the hospital in the Wartburg; but his state was such that even the most courageous attendants in the institution would neither touch him nor admit him. Elizabeth, coming at her usual hour, no sooner beheld the little sufferer lying helpless and forsaken at the gate, than she took him up in her arms, carried him to the castle, and placed him in her own bed."

"Sophia, indignant, flew to the landgrave. 'My son,' she burst forth, 'come with me instantly, and see with whom your wife shares your bed;' and she led him to his chamber, relating, in exaggerated language, the extraordinary occurrence that seemed to crown all the mad acts of his wife's charity. The landgrave, though he said not one word, could scarcely conceal his irritation and loathing. He snatched the coverlet from the bed, *and lo! instead o the leper, there lay an infant, surrounded with a halo of light, and bearing the features of the new-born babe of Bethlehem!*"*

This example is, however, more admirable than imitable. It is a rare thing to have to perform heroic acts of any virtue, even that of charity. Where a miracle occurs, as here, Providence means to inculcate a lesson. The teaching, to the Catholic mind, is a plain one: it is only the repetition, under a different form, of the Master's doctrine, that he is

* "Heroic Women of the Bible and the Church," c. xxxiii. pp. 349, 350.

represented by the persons of the poor and the suffering.

So, with this conviction firmly seated in the soul of the Christian mistress of a household, it will be easy for her to see with what reverence and generosity she must treat the poor. We say "reverence." For if her womanly heart has schooled itself to behold Christ present in every one of the needy who come to her door, she will not have to be reminded to show to all, without exception, kindness. Kindness is something far beneath reverence; yet let us insist upon the absolute necessity of kind looks and kind words. No one better than a woman knows how far kindness goes, or how much and how long a kind word or a look of tender sympathy will be treasured up by those on whom they are bestowed. If you have nothing else to give, if your purse is empty, and your bread has failed, open the spring of kindness in your heart, and let it pour out on the hearts of the poor sweet words of compassion, often more needed and more rarely bestowed than food on the famishing, or cold water on the faint and weary.

Follow the rule of the great St. Francis, therefore: *Be invariably and unfailingly kind to the poor.* And this precious quality in the temper and bearing of man or woman can only be secured by the habitual practice of that "reverence" just mentioned. It is more needful than ever that in every Catholic home mothers should cultivate that ancient respect for husband and children which was inspired by a lively faith, and made every member of the Christian community view in his fellow-Christians the children of God, the person of Christ Himself. This feeling in-

spired the father of the great Origen—a father found soon afterwards worthy to die the death of the martyrs—with a reverence for his infant son so deep and so sincere that he was wont, as he passed his cradle, to uncover the child's breast and to kiss it kneeling, knowing, as he said, that the babe was the living temple of the Holy Ghost.

Surely, Catholic fathers and mothers ought to find an exquisite pleasure in such elevating thoughts and sentiments as this; surely they should so consider each other, and respect each other, as if they too were chosen vessels, vessels of grace, bearing about in their bosoms the Creator Spirit; and most surely ought it to be the mother's chief delight to reverence in every child of hers a something far more holy, more precious than the chalice used in the Holy Sacrifice, or the sacred vessel shut up in the Tabernacle, and in closing Christ's divinest gift to our souls.

Can we school and accustom ourselves so to reverence the poor as to see in them the person of Him who is represented as evermore standing in the night, wet by the dew or the rain-storm, at the door of every one of us, and gently knocking for admission to the light and warmth of our fireside?

This said, it is not our design to say either to the wealthy or to the needy housewife what measure she is to follow in relieving the wants of the poor.

THE CHARITABLE PEASANT-GIRL.

In our own days we find in Catholic countries most illustrious examples of unbounded charity among the poorest classes of labourers. At St. Etienne-la-Varenne,

in the south-east of France, lived a country girl, named Magdalen Saulnier. "Pious from her cradle, she used to distribute every day to the neighbouring poor part of the provision that she received for herself to take into the fields; though of a weak constitution, she used to walk long distances to visit other poor and give them alms, which she had begged from the rich. During fifteen years she supported in this manner a poor blind man and his idiot daughter, daily visiting them, though they lived a league and a half from her home. A poor woman afflicted with leprosy, in the hamlet of Grandes-Bruyères, had no one during eighteen months to come near her but Magdalen, in whose arms she breathed her last. In 1840, during the inundations of the Rhone, she narrowly escaped being drowned while conveying her daily provisions to another poor woman in the Grange-Maçon; and, when reproached for her imprudence, she replied: 'Why, what would you have me to do? I had not seen her the day before.' In the depth of winter, in 1835, she had discovered a poor woman, named Mancel, living far away in a hut, more like a wild beast's den than a human habitation. This poor creature was ill, and Magdalen would not leave her alone. Towards the close of a long night, a thick snow covering the ground, she lighted sticks, which caused so great a smoke that she opened the door to let in fresh air, when a wolf stood ready to dispute with Death its prey. It required all her efforts, aided only with a large stone, to keep the door closed against the furious animal, which howled and struggled for entrance till the dawn. Some hours after, the woman expired. Then

Magdalen, fearing that the wolf would return, took up the body on her shoulders, and carried it to the house of the nearest peasant, who received it till the burial took place."*

What an example is here—in this poor girl, whose whole life was consumed in the incredible hardships of a field-labourer—for the wives and daughters of our labouring classes in town and country. There is not a narrow street, crowded with tenement houses, in any one of our large cities, nor a manufacturing population in any of our great industrial centres, in which every woman who reads these pages cannot find some poor mother burdened with a family who is always busy in doing good around her to those poorer and more burdened than herself; some factory-girl, sparely clad and poorly fed, who is an angel of good counsel, comfort, and all manner of help to her companions. Travellers over a sandy and treeless waste often chance upon green and shady spots rising like islands of the blessed in the midst of an ocean of death and desolation. When they come to examine what has made these fairy spots so beautiful, they find a spring of living water gushing up from the bosom of the earth, overflowing its native spot, causing the grass to grow, and the shrub to flower, and the tree to take root and thrive; and thus the green carpet spreads round about that cool spring, and bird and beast and man himself hasten gratefully to enjoy the shade, the refreshing waters, the loveliness and repose of the spot. Examine well, in these moral wastes, so frequent and so hideous amid our civilisation and our Christianity, what is the source

* *Compitum*, b. iii., pp. 265, 266.

of the sweet and sanctifying influences you discover in certain neighbourhoods: you will be sure to trace it to some womanly heart, in the poorest of hovels frequently, and not seldom in the coldest and most naked of garrets.

FRENCH-CANADIAN WOMEN AND THE IRISH ORPHANS OF 1847.

But let us point out, nearer home, some heroic examples which we may hold up as a mirror to American womanhood.

And first must be recorded here, by one who was an eye-witness of what he relates, and before the generation which beheld it has passed away, one of the sublimest instances of Christian charity known to ancient or modern times. New York and Quebec have not yet forgotten the Irish famine of 1846-7 and its terrible consequences. But it is with the latter city in particular that this narrative has to deal. Fearful as had been all through the fall and winter of 1846 the tidings borne to America about the privations endured by a whole famishing people, and the mortality caused by fever and other attendant diseases, but little apprehension was felt in Canada when navigation opened with the early spring. Consequently nothing like adequate preparation was made by the local authorities either at the quarantine station below Quebec, or at any of the usual landing-places along St. Lawrence.

The result of this want of forethought was terrible both for the thousands of wretched immigrants cast all of a sudden on our shores, and for the population among whom the poor fevered victims carried,

whithersoever they went, the seeds of pestilence. The quarantine station on Grosse Isle, below Quebec, became a hot-bed of the most virulent typhus fever, and almost all the priests who were called in turn to minister to the spiritual wants of the crowded sick on ship and shore, caught the disease, many of them dying, and the others carrying disease, death, and dismay back with them to their parishes. In the city of Quebec itself but comparatively few ravages were committed by this dreaded "ship-fever:" the steamers which conveyed the healthier immigrants to Montreal and the upper St. Lawrence not being permitted to land. In Montreal, however, and in Kingston and Toronto their arrival and passage were marked by a fearful mortality. In the first-named city, Bishop Bourget, his coadjutor, Bishop Prince, his vicar-general, and some thirty priests were stricken down by the plague. The seminary of St. Sulpice alone lost eight of its members. Bishop Power of Toronto fell a victim to it, and its ravages were such, during the early summer, that they far outstripped those of the cholera.

Of course thousands upon thousands of orphans were left behind—and that, too, at a time when to give them a refuge in any home in town and country appeared to be bringing certain death into the family. Yet—and this is what must redound to the eternal honour of the French-Canadian population of the present province of Quebec—not only was there no hesitation manifest in adopting these little castaways, but at the voice of their bishops and priests the people of the country parishes vied with each other in their zeal to share their homes with them.

THE WIFE OF A SHIP-CARPENTER A MINISTERING ANGEL OF MERCY.

One crowning instance must be selected ere we close this chapter, to demonstrate what womanly hearts can and will effect for the suffering and the needy. It is November in Quebec, in that same memorable year 1847, and November had set in with unusual severity. The country parishes all round had each received its colony of Irish orphans or young girls, who were adopted by the excellent farmers. Still the temporary asylums in Quebec attached to St. Patrick's church remained overcrowded: no provision had been made for their sustenance during the long winter which was setting in so fiercely; and local charity, it was feared, had been exhausted by the extraordinary drain of the preceding six months.

At a meeting of ladies it was resolved that the most zealous would go by sub-committees of twos and threes into all the neighbouring parishes, and knock at every door to exhort every family to adopt one of the many hundreds of homeless waifs left behind by the retiring tide of disease and wretchedness. Women's tongues are eloquent when fired by such a cause; they were welcomed everywhere, and a day was fixed when the orphans should be brought to St. Patrick's church, and all who wished to add one more stranger to their family circle were to go there and make their choice.

So, on the day appointed, the ferries from Point Levi and the Island of Orleans were early crowded with farmers' wives and daughters, while along the

roads from St. Foye and Beauport, Charlebourg and Lorette, the vehicles of the country people streamed into the city as to some great public festival.

It was near noon, and in the house of a French-Canadian ship-carpenter, out near the banks of the S tCharles River, at the extremity of the St. Roch suburb, the cheerful, active mother of six children was just concluding her morning's labour, sending off her oldest girl with the father's dinner to the ship-yard, leaving her infant nursling with a kind neighbour, and then hurrying away, a distance of full two miles, to Patrick's church. She had been delayed, in spite of her utmost exertions, and her only feeling, as she almost ran along the road, was one of fear lest she should be too late at the church and miss the prize which she had promised her husband to bring home to himself and their dear ones.

The silent, empty streets through which she passed on nearing the church made her heart sink within her; and as she entered St. Patrick's there was no one there but a few good old souls telling their beads before the altar, and some soldiers of the garrison performing the "Way of the Cross." The tears filled her eyes as she knelt a moment in adoration; and then she hastened to explore the two large sacristies behind the church. They were empty! As she passed through the lower one, what she deemed a stifled sob struck her ear; but the distant corner whence it seemed to issue was very dark, and her eyes were still half-blinded by the brilliant sun outside and the glare of the snow. So, in her excitement, she heeded not the sound, but

crossed the court-yard to the rectory and knocked timidly at the door. The servant, on opening, saw this good woman in tears, and scarcely able to articulate one word. At length she gasped out, "The orphans?" "The orphans, ma'am?" replied the other; "there are none here!" "Where are they?" "All gone—all taken away by the ladies." "Have you kept none that you might let me have?" "No, indeed," was the answer; and with this the poor woman turned away with a heavy heart. As she entered the lower sacristy on her way to the church, her ear was again struck with the sound of sobbing, and coming this time more audibly from the distant dark corner. She was there in a moment; and bending, or rather kneeling down, she distinguished a female child, with its head between its hands, sobbing and moaning piteously.

It was a little girl, some five years old, who on the voyage out had lost father and mother, brothers, sisters—all! The little thing, naturally a very beautiful child, had had in succession fever, dysentery, and smallpox; and beneath this complication she had almost sunk. She had partially lost the use of her lower limbs, and had been frightfully disfigured. In the church, whither she had been brought early in the morning with the other orphans, the charitable women had invariably passed her by, choosing, as was natural, the most comely children for their adopted ones—and the sensitive slighted little thing sobbed so piteously that she was taken to the sacristy in order not to disturb the proceedings in the church. There she had sat in the corner, sobbing herself to sleep, and had been forgotten

when the crowd left the church. So as the opening of the sacristy door a moment ago had roused the forlorn one from her somnolency, she had looked up at the stranger coming in with a revival of hope, and a sob escaped her as the latter passed out by the opposite door. Once more hiding her face in her hands, she wept and sobbed with increased bitterness, as if the ittle wounded heart within would burst her chest.

And thus the good carpenter's wife found her, as she knelt in the gloom by her side. "What is the matter, dear child?" she said, with infinite tenderness in her tone. "Who has left you here? Speak to me, my dear!" she went on, as she removed the hands from her face. The child looked up through her scalding tears at the sweet sound of that motherly voice, and all was plain to the speaker. The face thus revealed was so disfigured that the woman drew back involuntarily. But recovering herself instantly, and, as she expressed it, indignant at her own cowardice, she extended both arms lovingly to the weeper: "Kiss me, darling," she said, as her own tears flowed fast, "kiss me, come to my heart; don't be afraid; I'm your mother now." And she folded her in her embrace, covering her face and head with tears and kisses. The ship-carpenter's family possessed a blessed treasure that night.

No, this is not extraordinary charity: great hearts, like that of that noble woman, abound everywhere among our labouring people. O women, who read these lines, remember, that your charity, your generosity will find in your everyday ordinary life rich opportunities for their exercise. Never neglect

any occasion God sends you of doing the good you can. Great charity, like every other great virtue, does not consist in doing extraordinary things, or waiting for extraordinary circumstances: it depends on our doing, with all our heart, the good we have the chance of doing at every moment within our own homes, and outside of them.

CHAPTER VII.

THE WIFE'S CROWNING DUTY—FIDELITY.

* * * *

Ut nos junxit amor, nostro sic parta labore
Unanimes animos operit una domus.

As us love joined, so by our toil acquired,
One-minded souls one mansion covereth.
Ancient inscription on a French house.

"Do you know where you are? Do you know that this is the house of a man rich in virtue? . . . Do you know that these marbles, these stones, these paternal ceilings, represent the ancient honour and the venerated virtue of the family? The house of my father is the centre of loyalty, and the sanctuary of honour."—ALARION.

THE home is the nursery of the nation, and the deep and sacred love that binds into one existence the hearts and lives of husband and wife is the soul of the home life. Everything which tends to lessen, to divide, to sully that sacred union of hearts, strikes at the very life of the family, and aims at upsetting the foundations of the moral world.

The sacred virtue, the immaculate honour of every family, is inseparable from the purity and perpetuity of the love pledged to each other by both parents; more especially, in universal estimation, is the family honour dependent on the inviolable fidelity of the mother towards him to whom she gave her early love.

Hence the deep significance of the prayer of the

Church in the solemn ceremony of marriage. She who had proposed to the imitation of all wives the undivided and unalterable love which she ever bears to Christ, her Spouse, who gives them in her inviolable and eternal fidelity to Him, to his honour and interest, the model of the true woman's unwavering, sustained, and devoted fidelity to her husband, makes of this notion the central point in her magnificent marriage ritual.

Throughout all ages known to history, the most refined peoples have looked upon the ring as the symbol of eternity—as the proper emblem, therefore, of the union of souls underlying the matrimonial contract.

THE RING SYMBOLIC OF ETERNAL FIDELITY.

When the Church has witnessed and sanctioned by her blessing the mutual and solemn pledge given by bride and bridegroom, she proceeds to bless a ring, which is given to the bride as a symbol and seal of the union into which she has entered, and of the enduring fidelity with which she is to feed the sacred fire of mutual affection and to watch over the honour of her hearth-stone.

"Bless, O Lord, this ring," such is the prayer, "which we bless in thy name, in order that she who wears it, by preserving unbroken fidelity to her husband, may continue in peace and the accomplishment of thy will, and also ever live in mutual charity."

Where the beautiful ceremonial is carried out in its intended fulness, the nuptial benediction is followed by the offering of the adorable sacrifice.

Christ comes down on the altar, who so loved the Church, his bride, that He "delivered Himself up for it, that He might sanctify it, cleansing it by the laver of water in the word of life, that He might present it to Himself a glorious Church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish."

There, at that altar, and in that presence, kneel the two for whom the Saviour God comes down, his hands filled with blessings for these his children beginning life together, and his heart overflowing with untold treasures of grace, so needful to them on their pathway of pain and labour.

But there is more than this: the Church breaks in on the most solemn portion of the liturgy—that between the consecration and communion—to pronounce a further blessing on the bride. Turning towards the newly-married, the priest, as if his hands were laden with the blessings brought from on high, and his lips touched with the hallowed fire to prophesy good things to the suppliants prostrate there, thus prays:

"O God, who by thy might didst create all things out of nothingness; who, having ordered the first stages of this universe, and made man to the image of God, didst make man's substance the principle of woman's being, that she should thus be his inseparable companion, teaching us thereby that a union originating in such unity may never be broken without crime; O God, who didst hallow this conjugal union by so surpassing a grace as to make the primitive nuptial alliance the prophetic figure of the mysterious union of Christ with the Church; God,

by whom woman is thus united to man, and the primordial society thus formed is endowed with a blessing which alone survived the punishment of original sin and the judgment executed through the deluge; look down propitiously on this thy handmaiden, who, about to begin her companionship with her husband, beseeches Thee to grant her thy protection: in her may the yoke of love and peace ever abide; faithful and chaste, may she wed in Christ, and be evermore the imitator of holy women; may she prove lovely to her husband, like Rachel; wise, like Rebecca; long-lived and faithful, like Sara; may the fell Author of (Eve's) prevarication find no trace in her of the actions which He counsels; may she be immovably attached to thy faith and law: the spouse of one man, may no other love ever touch her; may she school and shield her own weakness by home-discipline: may she be modest and dignified, chaste and venerable, enlightened by wisdom from on high; . . . may she win approval by her stainless life, and thus attain to the rest of the blessed and the heavenly kingdom."*

THE WIFE'S HONOUR THE FOUNT OF ALL HONOUR.

Pagans, in ancient times, were wont to attribute the origin of each mighty river to a peculiar deity; so they built a temple at its head-waters, and there offered frequent sacrifice in order that the stream throughout its course to the ocean might be pure and healthful, and fraught with all manner of blessings to the lands it watered.

* The Roman Missal in the "Nuptial Mass."

This, like many other customs, was only the perversion of a deep religious truth. God has committed this earth, and all therein that is most beneficial to man, to the custody of those blessed spirits who, destined to be in eternity the fellow-citizens of men made perfect in glory, take delight in watching over their welfare, and being their companions in this life of trial.

But if a perverse sentiment induced the heathen of old to consider as a something holy and divine the well-spring of mighty rivers, what must not a religion which comes from the true God think of the home which He destines to be the source of a race of men and women designed to be his own adopted children? What solemnity must the Church not employ to hallow that union, on the permanence and sacredness of which depend the honour, the unspotted name, the greatness and happiness of a family throughout all succeeding generations?

Hence the inconceivable care with which the Church has, ever since the days of Christ—the second and truest Parent of mankind—watched over the unity and sacredness of that bond which makes of father and mother the one, sole, loving and beloved well-spring of the family existence, pride, and honour.

IN WHAT THE WIFE'S FIDELITY CONSISTS.

In the two preceding chapters we have insisted much on the qualities which enable a wife to be, in the fullest sense, the most delightful companion, the most efficient helpmate, the most trusted friend and confidante of her husband. All this she cannot be

without being at the same time most truly devoted to him in thought and affection, so that he alone, after God, fills her mind and her heart.

We have touching examples of this inviolable fidelity, springing, in the first instance, from that single-hearted and absorbing love of a good husband which leaves no thought of any other love being possible; and, in the second, from a wife's own high principle and fear of God, which keeps her true to the love she pledged, even when its object has become most unworthy, or, possibly, most hateful.

FIDELITY ILLUSTRATED.

In the patriarchal ages before Abraham, in the age of Noe and those preceding the flood, there was no question among the families of the blessed line of Seth of admitting a second wife into the family. That was characteristic of the evil brood of Cain—his son, Lamech, being mentioned as the first who had departed from the unity of the institution of marriage as it came from the hands of the Creator. But Seth, himself, and every one of the blessed descendants who kept alive on earth the primitive faith in Jehovah and the belief in the promised Redeemer, also maintained in their households the faith they had pledged to the wife of their youth. Though these men lived five hundred, six hundred, or even nine hundred years and more, their hearts were content with the love, and their lives filled with the fidelity, of that one woman: it was a sacred fire in these august patriarchal homes, burning undimmed century after century on the hearth-stone, an example,

even at this distance of time, deserving of the wonder and veneration of their degenerate descendants.

REBECCA'S FIDELITY PREFIGURES THAT OF THE CHURCH.

The violation of that unity by Abraham, even at the solicitation of his faithful Sara, was a manifest imperfection in him, who should have known better, and a want of faith and error of judgment in her, who had been brought up among the licentiousness of the Mesopotamian idolatry. But Abraham's son and successor, Isaac, and his bride, Rebecca, departed not from the great primitive law. For Isaac, who bore the wood of his sacrifice up the mountain-side, was the figure of Christ; just like Isaac's early and only love, Rebecca, brought to him so wondrously from afar, was the type of the Church.

It is the love of both Rebecca and the Church that forms a model and a rule for every Christian wife.

JUDITH'S EXAMPLE.

We have nearer to us in the Old Testament history other touching examples of fidelity in wives to the husband of their youth. Judith the Deliverer, "the Joy of Israel," the glory and honour of her people, was widowed young, and, though surpassingly beautiful and most wealthy, she remained true to the memory of her husband, inviolably faithful to the love she had plighted to him. The sudden inspiration which came to her to offer herself to the admiring eyes of the Assyrian general, was no deviation from the law of fidelity which she had so

scrupulously followed till then. She trusted to God's angel to keep her honour safe in the Assyrian camp, and, as she afterwards declared, he had watched over her coming and going till she had struck the blow which freed her country. The victory once won, and the national thanksgiving over, she put off her rich robes, resumed her sober widow's weeds, buried herself once more in the solitude of her own house, and gave up the half-century of life which remained to her to prayer, fasting, alms-deeds, and the cherished worship of her husband's memory.

ANNA THE PROPHETESS.

So it is with that remarkable woman whom we meet with in the temple at our Lord's presentation therein, Anna the Prophetess. She, too, had been left a widow after seven years of companionship with her husband, and "she was a widow till fourscore and four years, who departed not from the temple, by fasting and prayers, serving night and day."

She was rewarded by beholding in the flesh the Redeemer promised to Adam and Eve in the garden, and whose glory, like the first fires of sunrise above the eastern hills, patriarchs and prophets had only looked on "from afar." She was also privileged to see in the temple the Mother most blessed, who was prefigured by Eve as well as by Judith.

These are only landmarks on the glorious pathway of true womanhood, pointing out in the inspired writings the honour paid to fidelity, and the reward bestowed on it even in this life.

IDEAL UNITY AND ETERNITY OF CONJUGAL LOVE.

They teach this lesson, at all events: That the purest and greatest of women considered the love which they had given to the husband of their youth as a something so sacred, a gift so divine, that they could allow no other love to intrude upon it; they had meant it to last for all time and for all eternity, and as such they cherished it, even when their loved companion had been taken early away from them.

There is no doubt that this ideal eternity and unity of conjugal love is that upheld and blessed by the Church.

But what is of the deepest practical importance is,

FIDELITY TO THE LIVING.

Of this we have most touching examples all through the pages of Christian history. Nor is it necessary to insist at length upon this, where matrimonial unions are well assorted, and where, on both sides, there is the fear of God, a love blessed of Him, and all the charities of the home-life ever fed by the reception of the sacraments. It is where a union is ill-assorted, unhappy, and where, particularly, the husband happens to be anything or everything save what the wife, in her innocent dreams of goodness and manliness, conceived as the real character of her lover.

It is in the home where these dreams have been succeeded by a sad awakening, where the ideal sought after and loved turns out to be a hideous spectre, and where the idol the bride worshipped so sincerely has been dashed to pieces on the hearth-stone, that the young wife needs to look up to God, to call on his Name, to seek for his grace in order

to be true to him and to herself, in spite of the terrible deception of which she is the victim.

Let us give, first, a few pregnant rules, which may serve for all, whether happy or otherwise; we shall afterwards point out to the unhappy and sorely tried the only road on which they can find salvation.

RULES.

A cardinal principle in home life is, never to allow one's self to suspect or to distrust one's dear ones, save only when the evidence of guilt or unworthiness is irresistible. Even then the terrible truth must be kept secret from every living soul; it is only when absolutely necessary, and in an extremity, that a wife should mention it, though never so guardedly, to an experienced and holy guide. From one's relatives on both sides, from father or mother, brother or sister, the secret should be strictly and sacredly kept, so long as the reformation and salvation of the guilty one, or the protection of one's children, or some such weighty consideration, does not compel one to speak so much of the truth as is needful.

KEEP YOUR FAMILY TROUBLES TO YOURSELF.

It is impossible for a wife to be too reserved on this point: it would be fatal to seek confidants even in one's nearest and dearest. Where conscience is concerned, extreme care should be taken, both in choosing the person to be consulted, and in the manner in which the communication is to be made. Even a father, if he be a man of wisdom, experience, and high principle, will rarely encourage a married daughter to make him her confidant in her secret

troubles. If he has been a good husband, blessed with a good wife, his own heart will have taught him how jealous a husband is of seeing any man made his wife's confidant.

There must be extreme necessity, then, to justify a wife in revealing her troubles to priest or to father, even with all the reservations made above. To make a confidant, even of a brother, is most unwise, under any but very extraordinary circumstances; but to go with one's troubles to a stranger, be he what he may, is to court danger, and to go more than half way to meet ruin.

If confidence given to persons of the opposite sex is fraught with such certain peril, how much more so is friendship?

THE FRIENDSHIPS BANEFUL TO FIDELITY.

Lady friends and lady confidantes unwisely chosen, and kept in spite of a husband's remonstrances, have destroyed the peace of many a home where there was, otherwise, every element of happiness, sincere mutual affection, companionship, and faith in each other's virtue. But gentlemen friends, where a wife is so bereft of sense, of discernment, of womanly tact, as to permit such a monstrosity to come into her life—*gentlemen friends* are the worst enemies of her honour, her home, and the happiness of all belonging to her.

If a wife be already happy in possessing a husband who fulfils her ideal of manliness, who is all in all to her, she does him the foulest wrong, and her own honour irreparable injury, in transferring to any man living any part of her affections. If, as we suppose, she loves her husband with her whole heart,

how jealous would she feel of any woman on whom her husband would bestow anything like friendship! Would she not resent it—and most justly—as a grievous wrong done to herself? But she is not to forget that, in a family, a husband's friendships do not tend to bring dishonour on the children, like the aberrations of a mother's heart.

We cannot affirm it too strongly, the honour of families depends, chiefly, on a father's reputation and achievements; the dishonour of families on the unhallowed friendships of mothers.

WHEN DANGER BEGINS.

The greatest danger for the heart of the wife, till then blameless, unconscious, and unsuspicious of evil, arises in those seasons of deep domestic trouble, discord, and unhappiness. It is in these seasons of trial that a wife should go to the heart of the Crucified for sympathy, light, and strength. Oh! if women whose hearts are sore, and whose troubled spirit yearns for consolation and counsel, only knew what light, and sweetness, and energy of soul can be found in one quarter of an hour's secret converse with the crucifix, that most eloquent of books and most enlightened of all counsellors and consolers! If they could turn aside from the hollow and dangerous sympathies of human friendship, even when least perilous, and betake them to the Divine Comforter, who evermore dwells on our altars, what a heart they would find there! And how they would rise from before the Veil and the Mercy-Seat refreshed, strengthened, and resolved to take up their cross and follow Him!

How many of our purest, bravest, best, cannot put away from them the cross which is to be a life-long burden! Bear it they must. If they refuse to carry it, the weight crushes them; if they take it up willingly, joyously, as He did, it bears them forward, imparting to them an energy all divine, and heavenly joys amid all the bitterness of earthly trials!

CARRY YOUR CROSS AND IT WILL CARRY YOU.

We know such mourners, whose young lives have been blighted by a union with guilt, secret vice, and falsehood; but who have taken up the cross with unflinching courage, determined to make of the ever-recurring trials and humiliations of each day a mine of merit with which to purchase the eternal joys. The pleasant and loved companionship about which their maiden dreams had been busy, had turned out, when viewed with carnal eyes, and judged in the light of this world's wisdom, nought else but being hopelessly tied to a loathsome leper. The love of suffering, to which, under the divine inspiration, the wife, on awakening from her dream, opened every avenue of her soul, is a divine companionship; it is treading, with our thorn-crowned King, the bitter but glorious road of crucifixion.

THE CHRISTIAN WOMAN IS BOUND TO BE SUPERNATURAL.

This lesson addresses itself to Christian wives, to women bound to be *Supernatural*, who are supposed to have entered on their matrimonial engagements with supernatural motives (and the not doing so is the source of untold and inconceivable miseries), who profess to lead a supernatural life amid all the

joys, the cares, the trials, and disappointments of their subsequent condition. Woe to them if they are not supernatural, and lovers of the cross, and the Crucified, when the fair and fond visions of earthly love requited vanish from their early path like the golden clouds of morning!

There is one book out of which every young wife, from her bridal day, would do well to read a daily chapter to her companion, "The Imitation of Christ;" it is brimful of the Spirit of God. Would that the wife on whose life the shadow of the dreadful heart-trials hinted at here falls for the first-time, would take up this almost divine book, and read such passages as the following:—

"O Lord God, Holy Father, be Thou now and forever blessed! For, as Thou wilt, even so hath it been done to me; and what Thou dost is good.

"Let thy servant take joy in Thee, not in herself, nor in any other being. For Thou alone art true joy; Thou art my hope and my crown; Thou, O Lord, art my bliss and my honour!

"O Father, just, holy, and ever to be praised, the hour of trial is come for thy servant.

"Father ever to be loved, it is right that in this hour thy servant should suffer somewhat for thy sake.

"Father to be perpetually reverenced, the hour hath come which from all eternity Thou didst forsee as about to be sent to me, that thy servant should be outwardly borne down, but should, interiorly still live unto Thee; that she should be for a little time held of no account, humiliated, and disappear from the sight of man; that she should be crushed beneath the weight of suffering and helplessness; in order

that so she may rise as from the grave in the dawn of a new light, and be glorified in heaven.

"Holy Father, so Thou hast appointed, and so willed, and this hath come to pass which Thou hast ordained.

"For this is a favour to thy friend, that she should suffer and be afflicted in this world for the love of Thee, how often soever, by whom soever, and in what manner soever Thou permittest it to befall her."*

THE CRUCIFIX AND "THE IMITATION OF CHRIST."

What soul will not rise from the foot of the crucifix, after such a prayer as this, with the consciousness, the deep-seated conviction, that God with her and in her will enable her to face and overcome the trials before her?

It is time that in every Christian household mothers should inculcate the lesson, morning, noon, and night, that their children, both sons and daughters, never will be or can be anything, unless they study before and above all things else to be supernatural men and women.

They must be that or they will become worse than pagans.

But let us look into the mirror of a life tried by humiliations and sufferings such as no one of our readers (we may safely predict it) will ever be called on to endure, and we shall see therein how a brave womanly heart can find courage to be the light and benefactress of a whole country, while that same heart is riven by the most terrible domestic griefs.

* "Imitation of Christ," B. III., c. 1.

GLORIOUS EXAMPLES OF FIDELITY—THE CHILD-WIFE.

We shall not give the names of the persons or the countries till our glorious tale be told, and the lesson hath sunk deep into the mind of the attentive reader.

A child of thirteen, reared with the most extraordinary care, and responding by every excellence and grace of mind and heart to this most careful culture, our heroine was given in marriage to one much her elder, and who, to extraordinary qualities, added passions and vices which threatened to make him the scourge of all who depended on him.

In his heart, sullied and wasted by lawless affections, there was no room for anything like pure and true love for the beautiful, innocent, and artless child which policy had made his wife; nor could an intellect dulled and clouded by unbridled sensuality even begin to understand a soul which was as unconscious of evil in herself or in others as the babe newly born.

So this child-wife was allowed to indulge amid her servants, in the beautiful home to which she had been brought, far away from her native country, all her tastes for piety and beneficence under every form, while her husband spent, during months and years, the leisure which should have been devoted to her in the most scandalous indulgence, and the most unworthy companionship.

The light only dawned on the forsaken and outraged one by degrees. Hers was a most loving nature; for a pure love is the deepest of all. But, as she had been reared in childhood under the especial care of a grandfather, whom three kingdoms

venerated as a living saint, she had been made to look upon offences towards the Divine Majesty as the supreme of evils, and the hideousness of sin as a something surpassingly loathsome.

Though the knowledge of her husband's infidelity inflicted a wound so deep that her life was feared for, she never allowed one word of complaint or blame to escape her lips; but she moaned unceasingly over the outrage done to God, and the scandal given to the people. She undertook, with the thought of turning away the divine anger from him, and from those subject to him, to expiate his guilt by protracted prayer, by austerities which her counsellors could not prevail on her to mitigate, and by all manner of alms-deeds and works of mercy.

The hoary sinners who had encouraged or tolerated her husband's early wickedness, at first laughed at the young wife's innocence, simplicity, and evident ignorance of all moral evil; but they were touched by the greatness of soul which knew not how to utter one word in blame of the guilt that dishonoured her home and her husband, and they were awed into veneration and love by the courage which resented so openly the injury done to the divine honour, and the splendid munificence that sought to make, of the poor and the suffering, intercessors between her offended God and her offending husband.

He, too, was touched by the sweet and uncomplaining sorrow of the injured wife. The sense of wrong had suddenly transformed her, and, in a day, she passed from the guilessness of a child to the majesty of a woman sensible to her wrongs. Yet,

not a word or a look betrayed the terrible grief which was gnawing away her heart's core.

The peerless flower of beauty and spotless purity which had been laid upon his bosom was drooping before his eyes; the atmosphere of evil which surrounded him had blighted its freshness. He was conscience-stricken, and filled with reverence, if not yet with love, for the angelic creature of whom he deemed himself unworthy.

His remorse gave her the hope that his heart was not dead. With the instinct of the true woman and the saint, which she was, she resolved to win that soul to God by patience, and by the irresistible power of prayer and charity. Of winning his love to herself she thought not. Thenceforward no opportunity was lost of doing on every side all the good she could in favour of the sick, the poor, and the erring. The false friends and companions who pandered to her husband's vices, and shared in his criminal pleasures, were to her but a portion of the great host of the Evil One, leagued together to destroy men's souls, and blight all that was fairest on earth; she was fain to enlist all she could under the banners of Goodness, which delighteth not so much in doing good as in making others good. And she was blessed.

The hosts of the poor, the suffering, and the reclaimed who daily and nightly lifted up their prayers in union with hers, prevailed with heaven; and heaven's grace, aided by the growing splendour of the young wife's spiritual beauty, at length won the husband's heart. The conquest was, however, only a slow one. The habits of evil had cast roots too

deep and too wide into that rich nature to permit them to be plucked up in a day, or to prevent their often cropping out at the surface in spite of the prudent wife's constant though gentle culture, and despite his own generous efforts at thorough amendment. The supernatural wisdom which sanctity bestowed on one so young as she was, taught her a patient husbandry, both in eradicating inveterate evil, and in waiting for the growth of virtuous fruits. This, she knew, was the law in the natural world around her, and she also knew that a similar law regulated the supernatural life of souls.

The day came, ere she had passed out of her early womanhood, when she was blessed with the certainty that her husband's heart was all God's and her own. From that hour her happiness was unspeakable, and her gratitude to the Author of all heavenly gifts showed itself in her increased fervour and joyousness, and in her unmeasured generosity towards the poor. From that hour also her husband lost no opportunity of proving to the world that he had determined to be in God's hand a docile and faithful instrument for every blessed purpose which his own conscience and the wisdom of his wife might counsel.

Of all the men who ever wielded power in that ancient Catholic land, none achieved what he and his angel-wife thenceforward planned and accomplished. He died with the title of "Father of his Country," given to him by the gratitude of his contemporaries, and confirmed by the admiration of after-ages. And she, his saviour, his better self, the prompter of every heroic and patriotic enterprise? She needed not to

be called the mother of her country; she became its patron saint and protectress, and the memory of her perfect life still helps to keep alive the light of faith and the flame of charity among the sad ruins of national greatness.

Sorely tried as had been the fidelity of that young heart, it was not spared, even when happier days had begun to dawn for her, the most cruel pain that a faithful and sorely tried wife can endure. She was calumniated by her servants, and rashly suspected by her husband, but too prone to see the motives and actions of others in the light of his own guilty conscience. One most painful trial, in particular, is recorded by historians. A page, perhaps a relative, or the young son of some most noble family, who had commended himself to his mistress by uncommon piety and tenderness towards the sick and poor, was frequently employed on errands of mercy. This excited the enmity or malignity of some of his companions, men accustomed, in all likelihood, to serve their master's worst vices, and who felt themselves ill at ease in the chaste atmosphere that surrounded his lady.

However the calumny was insinuated, it was but too readily believed, and the instant death of the supposed culprit was resolved upon. It was an age of violence, when might made law. But Providence interfered to save the innocent and punish the guilty. The calumniator perished by the hand of the assassin, and through the very device intended to take the life of his victim. The hand of God was visible. Other and more touching instances of miraculous interposition are also recorded of the long period of heart-

trial through which the young wife had to pass. One and the same truth shines forth from all: she had placed her trust in God, and God is bound not to deceive those who trust in Him.

And thus we come back to the moral purpose of our illustration. Let the wife whose eyes rest on these words, if Providence should ever permit her soul to be thus tried in the furnace, take well to heart these other words from the divine book already quoted:

A DIVINE PRAYER.

"Without thy counsel and providence, and without cause, nothing happeneth on earth. *It is good for me, O Lord, that Thou hast humbled me; that I may learn thy justifications* (Ps. cxviii. 71); that I may cast away all pride of heart and presumption. It is for my profit that shame hath covered my face, that I may take Thee for my consoler rather than men. . . . There is not one among all who are beneath the heavens that is able to console me but thyself, O Lord God, the heavenly Physician of souls, who strikest and healest, 'who bringest down to hell and leadest back again.' *Thy discipline is upon me, and thy rod itself shall instruct me* (Ps. xvii. 36). . . .

"Behold, O beloved Father, I am in thy hands; I bow myself down under the rod of thy correction. . . . Myself, and all that are mine, I commit to Thee for chastening: it is better to be chastised here than hereafter. . . . Grant me, O Lord, to know what I ought to know; to love what I ought to love; to praise that which is most pleasing to Thee; to esteem that highly which to Thee is precious; and

to reject and despise what Thou deemest vile and worthless." *

Such sentiments as these are like the fragrant air of the heavenly hills to one who has just passed through the valley of the shadow of death; like the sudden brightness and warmth of sunlight to one long imprisoned amid the snows and darkness of an arctic region. But He, who guided the pen and warmed the heart of the man who wrote them, will know, when you come to Him in your sore need, how to whisper far sweeter words than man can write; for He made the heart, and knoweth where lie the springs of its weakness as well as of its power.

THE VANITY WHICH LEADS TO DISHONOUR.

Would it not be a most ungracious act to darken these pages with a description, though never so brief and lightly shaded, of the home, whether rich or poor, ruined or made desolate by infidelity? Better far, so our readers will think with us, to paint the heroic constancy and preternatural joys of the faithful wife; faithful even while "the hungry fire with its caverns of burning light" was trying and searching every corner of her heart.

Only let a priestly hand add, before concluding this most important chapter, a brief warning, and as brief an exhortation.

If it be most true, and the voice of experience attests that it is, that the danger for the womanly heart, tried to its utmost by marital unworthiness, lies in the need of sympathy; so, in happy homes, where

* "Imitation of Christ," B. III., c. i.

there exists perfect love, and neither unsuitability nor disappointment, ruin comes from vanity, and from the appetite for display and enjoyment.

THE HOME-PLEASURES WHICH ARE A SAFEGUARD TO HONOUR.

Against this vanity there is no remedy, apart always from the grace of the sacraments, and these aids which God may vouchsafe to some souls; there is no remedy, we say, but in a wife's never seeking to please any other eye than that of her husband, or valuing any praise on dress, personal appearance, and accomplishment of any kind, but what falls from his dear lips, or caring for any amusement that is not shared by him; or in wishing to have any theatre for the display of any gift, natural or acquired, how transcendent soever, save the bosom of one's own family.

We have heard of women, most gifted and most accomplished, who, blessed with a large family, and burdened with the care of a numerous household, made it a point of conscience to dress every day of their lives, even in extreme old age, with the greatest care, in order to please their husbands, and give them thereby an outward proof of undiminished love; and to please their children, by ever setting them an example worthy of imitation. With these admirable wives and mothers it had been a life-long study how to make their own gifts and accomplishments contribute daily to the delight of the family circle. Intellectual and artistic culture, music and song, and the charming illusions of private dramatic entertain-

ments, all was made to serve the one great purpose of rendering home the sweetest, brightest, dearest spot of earth.

THE LOVE OF DISPLAY WHICH KNOWS NOT PERIL.

One need not fear to display to the utmost within the home sanctuary, and for the delights of one's own dearest, every best gift of God; the praise which comes from these dear lips is not that which intoxicates dangerously; the vanity which such praise may create is not that which is to be dreaded by mother or by daughter; and the delicious satisfaction enjoyed, both by the delight a wife and mother gives, and by that which she receives in return, is not one which the good angels may look on with displeasure.

On the contrary, the love of praise and display, which is so common and so natural in a certain measure, will find its lawful and most healthful satisfaction in these home-pleasures and celebrations; in these lie the antidote or preservative against the vanity fraught with peril.

Home-life, home-pleasures, home-virtues, in this respect, as in so many others, are the great means Providence employs, and religion counsels, to prevent or to counteract the tendencies towards finding one's only or chief distractions and enjoyments outside of home and the family circle. There are men who only sleep at home, and spend the remainder of their time outside of it. They cannot be said to have a home, or to have any conception of what a home is, or could be. If they are blessed with wives able and anxious to make their homes a paradise for them, what shall we say of their folly or their guilt? And

who will pity them, if the home thus forsaken, and absolutely neglected by its appointed guardian, should become a prey to the Tempter?

But of the women who only make their homes a brief breathing or resting-place in their unbroken and eternal round of vanity and dissipation, we need only say what everybody sees, that the curse is upon them, and that shame is ever flitting round their homes, like these legendary evil spirits that haunt the precincts of families doomed to perdition.

To the nobility of true womanly natures we need not recommend to be watchful over the sanctity of the homes in which they are the priestesses of the family religion, the jealous guardians and loving teachers of the Ancestral Faith, and the custodians of that treasure, dearer and more precious to every home where God is feared, and men's good opinion is valued, than royal power or fabulous wealth, the peerless jewel—Honour.

HONOUR, THE TREE OF LIFE OF THE HOME PARADISE.

When our first parents were thrust forth from paradise, they might have seen, as they turned to have one last look at what they had lost for ever, cherubim set there to guard its entrance, "and a flaming sword turning every way to keep the way of the tree of life." To you, O faithful women, who read this, be this truth welcome: Your paradise is your home, the tree of life is your honour, and from beneath its shade, from the sweet and safe centre of your bliss, you can look to the gate of your Eden, and see with the eyes of faith; as certainly as you see your own right hand, God's angels set to guard your

home, and the "flaming sword turning every way" to defend you and yours from evil.

So, when evil, overleaping the walls of your sanctuary, would threaten to desecrate its holiness, and steal away its priceless treasures, remember the noble rebuke of the Spanish maiden to the invaders of her father's home: "Do you know where you are? Do you know that this is the house of a man rich in virtue? . . . The house of my father is the centre of loyalty, and the sanctuary of honour!"

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MOTHER.

When at some holy festival or eve the church, at nightfall, begins to be filled with confused steps and lighted tapers; when, amidst the chant of men, and children, and women, a figure can be distinguished among all these, in a far recess, half obscured, having grouped around her, near the sombre wall, four young heads, on which she casts at times a look more sweet than solemn;—oh, whoever you may be, bless her! It is she, the sister, visible to the eyes of my immortal soul; my pride, my hope, my shelter; the joy of my young years; the hoped-for treasure of my age: it is she, the wife who has no joy but my happiness; who, if my children or myself ever seem to totter on the brink, without a severe word or a reproachful look, supports them with the hand, and me with the heart; she to whom I have said always, and who has said to me; "THROUGH ALL!" It is she, in a word, a flower of beauty, which goodness has perfumed: the flower is of earth, and the fragrancy of heaven.—*Quoted by* DIGBY in *Compitum*.

THE above poetic picture presents the true woman in the twofold aspect of wife and mother, young still, and in the active discharge of her duties as such, and hence this quotation serves as an apt transition to the all-important subject which now solicits our deepest interest. The faithful love which clings to husband, home, and honour, "through all"—through the storm, the flame, and the sea of bitterness—will not be apt to omit one sweet duty of motherhood. Even when all her womanly virtues are powerless to exorcise the demon of evil from her household, there remains to her, in the discharge of her maternal office, an unfailing source of deepest consolation, as well as of merit before God and man.

And here it is, most especially, that it behooves woman to be supernatural, so that the result of her motherly labours shall be to make of her dear ones, men and women truly deserving the name of children of God.

MEANING OF THE TERM "SUPERNATURAL," AS APPLIED HERE.

When the word supernatural is used, the entire non-Catholic world, as well as a great many Catholics —even educated Catholics—are but too apt to entirely misapprehend its meaning. There is in the modern mind, particularly where the masses are not Catholic, a disposition to look upon whatever is supernatural as contrary to nature, and, therefore, absurd, or as miraculous, and therefore outside of the common laws of action, and beyond our ordinary reach.

There is a general tendency to reject the supernatural order altogether, and to admit nothing as existing or possible but what is strictly in accordance with nature.

This is not the place for a philosophical or theological disquisition. But every mother will be glad to find, here, clear and simple notions enabling her to seize at a glance what the supernatural order is, and so to convey the light in her own mind to that of her children all through their training.

Looking upon the human race as one great family composed of the descendants of the one father and the one mother, and considering them in their relation to God's government over them in this life and the life to come, we conceive that He who created them

could reward them, after death, in accordance with their degree of fidelity to the law of nature, written equally on the heart of the savage and on that of the civilised man. This would be the "natural order" in which God would impose upon men no duties beyond those of love, obedience, reverence, and worship to Himself; of the reciprocal obligations and duties which bind together husband and wife, parents and children, family to family; and towards the authorities lawfully acknowledged in civil society. The virtues of truthfulness, honour, honesty, and of the general brotherly charity which should make every man look upon all other men as his brothers, the reverence for justice in all one's dealings, and so many other virtues that need not be named, belong to the "natural order," and are inseparable from man's condition under God's providence.

But the supernatural order, without doing away with a single one of these natural virtues, obligations, duties, and charities, considers man as belonging to a higher condition, to which, with all his natural powers, and virtues, and duties, he has been raised by the gratuitous love of his Creator. Man never could, in any supposition, have been created without being bound to his Maker by service in this life, by charity and justice towards his fellow-men, and by the retribution of the immortality following after such service and fellowship. But God was not content to leave man in this essential condition of mere natural service, fellowship, and charity: He raised him to the rank of his own adopted child, imparted to his mind a distinct knowledge of this glorious destiny, to his heart sentiments and energies

enabling him to live up to it; added to man's natural duties, obligations, and virtues, new aims, new obligations, a higher charity; a new ideal of goodness and greatness, and generosity;—all looking forward to an eternal fellowship with God, in his own inner life, in the world to come.

Thus the supernatural order is that in which God stands in the relation of Father to us, in which we hold the rank of his real adopted children, with all the sentiments, obligations, rights, honours, and graces attendant on this sublime elevation, all tending to the possession of that glory of the life to come, the Beatific Vision, the seeing God face to face, the being taken into society with the Three Infinite Persons of the Godhead, and into fellow-citizenship with his angels.

This adoption, this divine rank, these graces given in this life to mind and heart, and this unspeakably glorious and blissful fellowship of eternity, is a something so far above nature, so undue to it, so entirely beyond its requirements and capacities, that it is deservedly called "supernatural," that is, above and beyond nature.

HOW THE CHILD MUST BE MADE ACQUAINTED WITH THE SUPERNATURAL ORDER.

To inculcate on her children, as soon as their reason begins to dawn, that God is not only their Maker, as He is that of the heavens above them and the earth around them, but also to them a true Father, who cares for them, and gives them a right to the most magnificent of all inheritances, must be one of the Christian mother's early cares. Her own

sense of piety, her womanly wit, and instinctive knowledge of child-nature will teach her the best methods to be employed in order to let in by degrees, and one after the other, the beautiful and divine realities of the supernatural order, of that kingdom of God whose sovereign is true Father to us, of that glorious world in which Christ and his Blessed Mother are central figures.

There are few households so poor but they can afford to have one or two sweet prints representing the mysteries of our Lord's infancy and childhood, as well as a handsome crucifix, or, at least, a good print of the crucifixion. It is well to reject the abominable daubs published in our large cities, and "misrepresenting" every subject they profess to set before the devout mind. The sweet pictures of the Blessed Mother and her Babe, by Luini, or Fra Bartolomeo, and Crucifixions by such religious painters as Velasquez, cannot fail to produce a powerful impression. There are good engravings of them, for which it would be well to pay a little more; good chromos, like those published in London by the Arundel Society, are, unfortunately, beyond the reach of poor families. Would that we had, both in city and country parishes, some sodality interested in seeing that the homes of the labouring classes were provided with such objects of religious art as would inspire reverence and piety in the beholder. Nor must mothers forget to have a little statue or a print of the Angel Guardian; he is a friend to be known and loved early.

It must be the part of the judicious mother to explain in due time to her little ones, when they are

able to inquire about that heavenly Woman and her Babe, what relation they both bear to us. Some mothers, we know, have in their nurseries, "The Flight into Egypt," or the "Adoration of the Magi," subjects which will naturally oblige the children to inquire about the birth of the Divine Babe, and the whole story of his birth.

When, precisely, parents can draw the affection of the child-mind to the story of the Passion, and the Crucifix, they alone can determine. Some are averse to doing so before children are a little more advanced in years. Certain it is that they should be made acquainted with the sufferings of our Divine Benefactor before they emerge from childhood. This point of time being left to the judgment of mothers, let us be firmly convinced that of all the vehicles of supernatural instruction and solid piety there is no one more efficacious than

THE CRUCIFIX.

The Crucifix in Catholic households is not only the most eloquent and instructive of books for youth and old age; but it can also be made to speak divinely to the sense of childhood. Children are all athirst for knowledge once they begin to speak and to be capable of instruction by word of mouth. Their mind and imagination are forcibly impressed by the figure of the Man of Sorrows nailed to the bitter tree. They are quick to seize the reverence, the love, the worship with which a mother or a nurse looks upon this pregnant story of Love Crucified. Who is He? What brought Him there? What He is to us; what we owe Him, hope and fear from

Him, are lessons which a child may soon learn, for they are questions which arise in his own mind, and to which he is impelled to seek an answer by a Prompter within him.

For Christian mothers should not forget that in the infant soul dwells the Divine Spirit, communicated in baptism, and never expelled thence save by voluntary mortal sin. In the soul of every mother, too, who is in a state of grace, dwells the same Divine Instructor, prompting her to do her duty by her child, and pledged to aid her in her work.

THE DIVINE SPIRIT'S SHARE IN THE WORK OF EDUCATION.

Surely it must be a consolation and an encouragement to the mother to know that in this laborious but sweet work of forming each mind and heart under her care, she is doing God's own most blessed work, in which she has a right to count on his most effective and continual co-operation.

In imparting instruction, in forming the minds and hearts of her dear ones, the mother only does one part of God's work; He takes on Himself to do the other and the most important part. This she must rely on with undoubting certainty; but this, unhappily, is what so many Christian mothers never think of.

Let them, such, at least, as are desirous of profiting by the directions here given, only look at the work of the husbandman. He clears away the ground in which he purposes to grow his crop; ploughs it, prepares and examines his seed, casts it in the furrows, and covers it over. The rest is the work of all-

bountiful nature; of Him, rather, who is the all-wise and provident author of nature. He gives the warmth, the rain, and the dew. His hand unfolds the rich germ in the soil, till it grows up, and fructifies, and ripens for the harvest.

So is it with your culture, O mothers: the precious seeds of truth which you cast into the minds of your children, just when the spring-tide of their souls begins to dawn, are far more the care of God than the crops of the husbandman, dear as these surely are to his Fatherly providence. Fear not, then, but his Holy Spirit, dwelling in the dear souls you are cultivating, will shed on the germs you deposit the warmth of his sunlight, the late and the early rain. Do your best, and trust to the Divine Husbandman for the certain increase and the rich harvest in his own good season.

THE CROSS IS THE ALPHABET OF SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE.

The all-important thing for you is, that, above and before all things, your children should understand that they are "children of God," that Christ is their Elder Brother, who has purchased them with his blood the right to co-heirship with Him. The mystery of the Cross and the Crucified, once understood by them, will be a central light in which they can read all history before and after his death.

It is impossible for children to get a true knowledge of that great love, without feeling their hearts overflowing with love for Him, as well as for that dear Mother who stood in sorrow beneath the tree on

which her adored One hung in the death agony. Friendships formed in childhood, in the lovely years of innocence and youth, are friendships that last for ever. Make your dear ones love that Friend well, and He will take care that no lapse of time, or change of mind and heart, that no perversity of men, or experience of false-heartedness through life, shall disturb the image of that august and early affection in the soul's inmost sanctuary.

Make the Crucified and the Mother of Sorrows the first friends of every child of yours, and fear not but they will befriend them in life and death.

What has just been said will suggest how a true mother's teaching and formation may be supernatural in all other respects. Particular stress has been laid here on early devotion to our crucified Lord, both because it is the foundation of all the rest, and because, in our eagerness to read all the trash daily poured forth by the modern press, we seem not to bestow one thought on that book of books, the Crucifix.

EARLY LOVE OF CHILDREN FOR THE CRUCIFIED.

Even Catholics, nowadays, read with astonishment, or half incredulity, what is related of the early love for our dear Lord and his Blessed Mother of St. Stanislaus, St. Aloysius, St. Rose of Lima, or St. Teresa, and her little brother Rodrigo, without mentioning instances taken from the writers of the middle ages. Children, almost before the ordinary dawn of reason, become enamoured of Him whose unspeakable love is sculptured in such divine characters in that ever open and most simple book of the Crucifix.

A sacred thirst of voluntary suffering takes such possession of their souls that they long to suffer martyrdom, as we read of Teresa, and her favourite brother. St. Francis Borgia, when quite a child, lost his mother, the Princess Joanna, of Aragon; but her teaching and example had so familiarised the child with the supernatural love of suffering, that, after her death, he could not be prevented from fasting for her, and inflicting pain on himself.

There can be no mystery, no cause for wonder, in this when we remember that the domestic piety of our fathers was grounded on an intimate knowledge of our Lord and his mysteries. The birth in the stable; the sudden flight across the wilderness to Egypt; the hidden and laborious life at Nazareth, and, above all, the history of his Passion, were to childhood itself living realities; so was the divine story, with all its impressive circumstances, brought home to them by what they heard and what they saw! They could not enter one of the beautiful churches of olden time without finding these scenes of suffering appealing to their young souls from the sculptured doors and porticoes outside, and from the painted walls and windows within; while in that great book of the Lamb, such as every Christian church aimed at being, they saw, grouped around Christ and his Mother, the apostles and saints who had most closely imitated them by their suffering life and death.

Faith was the very principle and breath of life in the old Catholic homes; and the great central mystery of faith, the Crucifixion, and its memorial sacrifice, the Eucharist and the Mass, were to the youngest

children, as to their parents, teachings brought home to mind and heart, not for mere sterile admiration, but for practical gratitude and imitation.

From this living spring of faith in the young heart flowed the piety which gave a colour to the entire after-life. And to this we beg the earnest attention of the mothers who read our pages. With this supernatural tendency imparted to thoughts, and aims, and actions, from the very beginning of childhood, the fundamental natural virtues, which we shall enumerate further on, are sure to be practised with the supernatural view of pleasing the Divine Master and Model.

OTHER QUALITIES IN THE MOTHER'S CHARACTER AND GOVERNMENT.

This supernatural spirit, animating both a mother's life and her teaching, will only be successful in its purpose and labours when she shows herself careful to cultivate the qualities, without which piety would be barren, or be mistaken, for unreasoning superstition or absurd inconsistency.

Every mother must be consistent in her maxims and rules of government. Let her, in her moments of leisure and solitude, weigh well what rules she is to lay down for her children, so that in her government of them she may not be exposed to either promulgate a law rashly, and then have to withdraw it, or to contradict at night what she has said in the morning with all seriousness, or to undo to-morrow what she is doing to-day.

Children, very young children especially, are exceedingly serious-minded. They mean exactly what

they say, and they think, of course, that their elders, superiors, and, above all, their parents, mean what they say. You shake their confidence in you when they discover—which they do with amazing quickness—that you did not mean what you said. This discovery is most fatal in another respect; it lays the foundation for the child's untruthfulness.

Perfect truthfulness is not only truth in our words when they are the exact expression of our knowledge and meaning, giving to our hearers a perfect picture of our mind; it is also consistency in our actions when these are in literal conformity with our professions and our promises. A child's mind is perfectly and pitilessly logical; its open, candid, watchful eye has the virtue of Ithuriel's spear to unmask falsehood and deception. And, as children are imitative, naturally disposed to copy the example of their parents, if they find these untruthful, or equivocating, or artful, they will acquire their vices as speedily as they would their virtues.

Hence a mother must be cautious and deliberate,

CONSISTENT AND TRUTHFUL.

It is on this latter quality alone that we insist here. The whole career of a child, its fortune or misfortune, its honour, happiness, misery, or disgrace, all will depend largely, perhaps mainly, perhaps altogether, on this one great moral virtue of *Truthfulness*.

It is absolutely necessary to this (ordinarily speaking), that a mother should never, in any one instance, be known to utter an untruth. Hence the horror which she ought to have herself of every species of falsehood, if she would inspire her dear ones with a

like horror, and fill them with a sincere love of the truth.

We know, at this moment, a man placed at the head of a most flourishing and widely-trusted establishment, who owes his rise from the most extreme poverty to his present eminent position to the strict love of truth inculcated by his mother, a poor washerwoman. As virtues, like vices, always travel in companies, the boy's truthfulness was only one of the many noble qualities which adorned him from childhood upward. His open, ingenuous, handsome face, when attending Sunday-school, and preparing for his first Communion, struck the priest who taught him. His threadbare and patched, but strictly neat garments, told their own tale of home-struggles and of a poor mother's careful training. His companions all respected him, although by no means the eldest among them. A visit to the mother's home, where an asthmatic husband and four young children, besides our little hero, depended on her labour, enlisted in their favour the sympathies of the Christian Doctrine Society attached to the parish church. The family were provided with work, which both parents could attend to at home; for the mother's anger was roused at the very thought of aid from charity. The oldest, after his first communion, was sent to an excellent commercial school, where he soon outstripped all his companions, but won the esteem of all by his manliness, and inflexible truthfulness and honesty.

From an humble position as errand-boy in a merchant's office he became clerk, and rose steadily in the confidence of his employer till he became his

partner and right-hand man. During all this time every penny he earned was brought to his mother, every hour he could spare from business was spent with her and the family. She rose with him to comfort, and then to affluence, and to this day he will have it said, although surrounded by a large family of his own, "that he is living with his mother." Her daughter-in-law has long learned to revere the true nobility of soul of the modest, quiet, unassuming little woman, who, at the age of seventy, is still, without seeming to be so, the teacher and idol of her grandchildren, no one of whom has ever been known to tell an untruth.

THE TRUE MOTHER MUST BE JUST, KIND, AND GENTLE.

A quality akin to this sterling quality of truthfulness is justice in the mother. Not only must she never exaggerate the faults or imperfections of her children, but she must also impress them with the conviction that she is absolutely impartial, never preferring one to the other: at least she must so control herself that neither by word or action must she manifest any unjust preference, or, indeed, any preference at all.

There is only one kind of preference tolerated in families, and that is in favour of the suffering or infirm. It will be the duty of the good mother to teach herself, and every one of her dear ones, to lavish on the sick, the suffering, the infirm, their most constant, affectionate, and delicate attentions. This is one of the "true charities" of home-life.

But what is destructive of all the "home charities," of peace, and concord, and happiness in every home

cursed with such preferences, are the unenviable beings known as "Father's Pet," and "Mother's Pet."

JUSTICE IN REWARDING AND PUNISHING.

Let the mother be also just in rewarding and punishing, as well as kind and gentle when she has to reprove and correct. It is wonderful how some women can magnetise children, command their attention and submission, make them listen, obey, work, and do, most willingly, things apparently the most opposite to their inclinations.

We have seen a room full of children, in the wildest uproar, defying the combined efforts of mother and nursery-maids, hushed suddenly into silence, order, and quiet work, by the appearance of "Grandmama," the very rustle of her garments seeming to quell the noise, while the bright, pleasant look, and a few words in a subdued tone, would still the tempest as if by some magic spell.

What is the spell? Firmness, gentleness, kindness, all combining to form that wonderful thing in man or woman which we call AUTHORITY. We do not mean, of course, thereby authority of place or office; but that authority which attaches to "character." And into this character, so irresistible in governing children or grown-up people, a household, a nursery, a school-room, or a multitude, the above qualities must enter. Add another, self-control, and you have a perfect mother and mistress of a household.

SELF-CONTROL, HOW INDISPENSABLE.

We do not mean by this term that social self-possession, or that perfect command of the muscles of one's countenance which our savages have learned to perfection. The self-control which is here recommended is only one degree, and that an inferior one, of the Christian virtue of meekness beatified by our Lord. It is the result, in persons naturally hot-tempered and passionate, of habitual victory over self, and of habitual watchfulness to secure the fruits of victory. This victory must be impressed on the tender minds of youth as most meritorious in the sight of God; as one of the many characteristics which make the Christian man or woman most like to Christ Himself.

But it will be in vain for a mother to preach it to her children if she is not herself in possession of it. Besides, and this is the important point, no mother ever yet controlled her children, or taught them successfully the practice of self-control, who did not know how to control herself; no mistress of a household ever governed children and servants, so as to maintain order, discipline, obedience, and industry, who did not show that she could govern her own words and temper, who was not perfect mistress, in the house, of her own soul.

It is God's will and wish that every mother should study this self-control, which is only the outward manifestation of that meekness and gentleness of spirit, so lovely in the sight of God and angels. Ay, and most lovely is it also in the sight of men, in the estimation, particularly, of children and servants, and

all persons dependent on us. And most blessed is it, as well as the source of manifold blessedness to all around us!

Children and servants never ought to see their mother, or mistress angry, or with the slightest sign of anger or impatience. We once heard servants, at the death of an honoured master, affirm, with tears in their eyes, that they had never heard from his lips an angry or a loud word. This was also the unanimous testimony of his children. But on this admirable parent and master, what was the influence of his wife? He was, by nature, hot and fiery, proud, and imperious, and resentful. And so was, by native disposition, his young wife, whom he wedded while yet in her teens. But she had been trained in a model home, and by the hand of a mother to whom gentleness was the fruit of many an early struggle with self.

The young wife, all enthusiasm and fire in her own disposition, was yet so gentle in her every word and act, so thoroughly devoted to her husband, that she soon made him as gentle as herself: and, after a union of more than thirty years, when death separated them, it was attested by servants, relatives, and acquaintances, by the numberless visitors who loved to partake of the hospitalities of that home, that not one angry word was ever heard from parents to children, or from one child to another.

This was the fruit of self-control, the blessing bestowed on gentleness and meekness.

GENTLENESS NEED NOT BE WEAKNESS.

There is a natural softness which is often mistaken

for the gentleness we have been describing. The former is the flexibility of lead, which permits itself to be bent in any direction you please; the latter is the elasticity of steel which has passed again and again through the furnace, and has been beaten beneath the hammer till it unites a proper degree of flexibility with its well-known firmness.

There are weak persons who persuade themselves that firmness consists in unbending stiffness, in a cold, harsh, cruel inflexibility, which never knows how to yield. But this is not what we mean when we say that the mother ought, in her dealings with her children, in admonishing, correcting, or punishing them, to be at once firm and gentle.

We shall never forget the passionate tears of a young mother, when she detected her boy in a first falsehood. "Oh! my child, what have you done?" she gasped out, with the tears streaming down her cheeks. "Told me a lie! And don't you know I *must* punish you?" The punishment was inflicted by the gentle-hearted mother, who wept the while; and it was firmly and severely administered; and then the boy, worthy of such a mother, seeing her inconsolable, flew to her arms, forgetful of his own pain, to weep on her neck, as he said: "Oh, mamma, I am only sorry I pained you! Don't cry, dear mamma, and I promise never to do so again." And the promise was kept.

NEVER CORRECT OR PUNISH IN A PASSION.

One golden rule should be ever kept in mind by mothers—indeed, by all persons charged with the training or correction of others—never to administer

reproof, correction, or punishment, when under the influence of passion or emotion.

If you would not lose the respect of your children, your authority and influence over them, wait till you are perfectly calm to speak to them, or to chastise them. Of course, the heartfelt grief of the young mother, just mentioned, went still further, and made a far deeper impression on her child.

WIN THE HEARTS OF YOUR CHILDREN.

It is a capital mistake made by parents, and a fatal mistake, when one looks at its dreadful consequences, to think that they can rely on the natural affection which their children bear them, and thus make no effort, and use no industry to win their love.

To be sure, nature has laid up in the heart of the child a deep store of affection, gratitude, and reverence for the dear authors of its earthly being. And it may take many years of neglect, or harshness, or even downright cruelty, to exhaust that store, to kill that deep and strong root of filial love in the soul. But experience daily shows that the store is not exhaustless, and that the most robust root of love and reverence can be killed.

There are mothers to whom their children are a burden, who bestow on them only a few rare moments of the time they devote to vanity or dissipation, who grudge them the few crumbs of affection with which they fondly imagine they can feed the hungry hearts of their babes, who leave the little unfortunates to the chance tenderness of strangers; and yet these mothers will expect love from their grown-up sons and daughters! These are unnatural mothers, how-

ever, who are a curse to their children, and to whom, in turn, by an inevitable retribution, their children will prove a curse. It is not with them we are concerned: they will not be taught or reformed; so, they will go down the steep and slippery slope on which the heartless move, to perdition! We are addressing ourselves to parents who think they love their offspring, or who do really love them, but who err most fatally in their way of showing it, and who may be still open to instruction.

There are parents, all too numerous in every class of society, who never seem to think that they need gentleness, kindness, loving words and ways, in dealing with children. It is not only fathers among the labouring and hardworked classes, who usually address both girls and boys with loud and angry words, with a curse, or an oath, or a vile epithet, or a blow: this is but two frequently the treatment which mothers have recourse to.

Can such unchristian parents expect either affection or reverence from these boys and girls, even before they have grown up to manhood and womanhood? We touch here upon one of the inveterate sores of domestic education among our labouring population, and would fain say more on the visible fruits of such training, but for the present, at least, we must content ourselves with sketching the portrait of a motherly love indefatigable in its endeavours, and admirable in its methods of securing and increasing continually the grateful love of children.

Of the importance and necessity of binding her children to herself by the ties of the strongest affection, surely every true mother must be convinced.

Not only her own happiness through life, but the temporal and eternal welfare of her children depends chiefly, generally, not to say almost universally, on the influence which a noble mother can wield over the mind, and heart, and whole conduct of her dear ones. And there is not one woman who reads this page but can and ought to be such a noble mother!

It is her duty and her interest. But how is this to be done? Women can teach themselves these methods far better than any man can teach them. They know how contagious love is; how resistless it is where it is ardently and constantly shown to those who may and ought to return it. The wisest and strongest are made foolish and weak by the show of a sincere, ardent, but unlawful affection. But, where God commands to love, and to love tenderly, constantly, and unweariedly, and where, as we have seen above, He co-operates with us in our labour of love, how can we not make sure of a certain and a rich return? Your love, O mothers, is as natural, as necessary, to the life of your children's souls, and to the health of their lives, as the sun's light and warmth are to the growth of the grass on the meadow, or to the ripening of the corn in the field. And your children are as certain to grow and ripen in perfect and lasting love for you, the dearest and best objects ever given man to love, as the grass and the corn to prosper in the sunlight and the warm air.

You have flowers in your garden, in your greenhouse, or in your room. There are among them some favourites which you wish no hand but your own to

tend. You have studied their nature, their habits, what can help them, or what can hurt and kill them. You know the kind of soil which suits them, and the quantity of moisture and warmth each needs. There is a sort of love in the care which one bestows on beautiful plants and flowers. And to this care, this intelligent and loving culture, these beautiful creatures respond by healthful growth and a more brilliant bloom.

Would that many mothers would bestow on cultivating the hearts of their dear ones the care, the study, the intelligence, the tenderness, we had almost said the love, which they devoted to the favourites of greenhouse or garden! A mother's loving eye is, daily and hourly, more to the growth and health of the noblest affections in the dear souls committed to her, than the great sun in the heavens is to the life of forest or field; her sweet words of praise, of encouragement, of correction, descend, like the rain and the dew, into the inmost sources of life in the heart, stirring up therein and fostering into bloom the germs of every manly virtue and noble womanly affection. See how each tree in the great virgin forest will send its trunk straight upward towards the sunlight and the warmth, and how its branches stretch upward towards the sky, to catch the raindrops by day and the dews of night!

Are you not, in the midst of your dear ones, the sunlight and warmth of their home and their souls? And do not these souls continually open their bosoms and reach out to you with unceasing hunger and thirst for the rain of your instruction, and the cool, refreshing dew of your love? Why are you so spar-

ing of what does not impoverish you, and what is sure to bring you a harvest of immortal gratitude and happiness?

But, leave we to the next chapter the many other most interesting things which yet remain to be said about the mother's duties, as well as the magnificent examples which illustrate woman's husbandry in cultivating the souls of her children.

CHAPTER IX.

THE MOTHER'S OFFICE TOWARDS CHILDHOOD.

ASSUREDLY, if Christian mothers make it the chief purpose of their life to be supernatural in their own interior, and in all their motives, actions, and methods, they will only have to labour, with the divine assistance, "to add intelligence" to all the treasures of mind and heart bestowed upon their babes by nature, increased and hallowed in such a wondrous way by Baptism, and "nothing will be wanting to make them angels." Nay, if they cultivate in them the "gifts of the Holy Ghost," bestowed in an inferior degree in Baptism, and in their fulness in Confirmation, they will grow in that understanding which is all divine in its objects, and the light it pours on all things, without ceasing to grow "in stature." Such mothers, by the careful and loving culture of the pure souls confided to them, will omit nothing that is "wanting to make them angels;" and as the result of such training many will continue angels "until Christ shall come."

We have some of these angelic men and women before our mind's eye now, watched over in childhood, as if they were incarnate spirits entrusted to the mother's care, to be trained in all the perfection of manhood and womanhood, while preserving all

the glorious characteristics of their angel-nature; they grew up in the spiritual beauty and spotless innocence of their baptism, unfolding in mind and heart these priceless "gifts" of the Holy Spirit, just as they developed all the exterior graces and loveliness of their human character, and so they continued till Christ came to summon them away, all too early, the world thought, from the society which so much needed the light of their examples.

THE DIVINE REALITY IN CHILDHOOD.

Once more, let us see in the baptised babe of the Christian mother what God sees in it: let the same sublime conception of the child's position and destinies which is in the Divine Mind be also in the mind of the parent. Just as a savage, ignorant of the value of gems or the precious metals, will prefer brilliant-coloured glass beads to the diamonds of Brazil, the emeralds of New Grenada, or the pearls of Coromandel, even so will it be with the mother who forgets or ignores what is the divine destiny of her babe, what price Christ has paid on the cross to lift it up to his own level, and what capacities are in that young soul for the most godlike virtues and goodness.

In the child brought back from the baptismal font to the mother's arms there is the human being with the fallen nature inherited from Adam, but redeemed and restored in Christ, and there is also the godlike being created anew, in baptism, in the likeness of its Divine Parent. In spite of the sacrament of the second birth, and the grace of elevation, with all its attendant gifts and aids, there remains in the child

the wound left by the primeval transgression: our inclinations are downward, and they have to be resisted, to be overcome, mortified, and deadened, if we would rise to the glorious heights of Christian heroism and godliness, which belong to the angelic and heavenly nature we have put on in Christ.

Thus, the mother has to watch over the manifestation of the evil dispositions which early peep out in the child, and tend to drag it down, because they are the inclinations of flesh and blood, and are of earth, earthly. These have to be combated, counteracted, immediately and unceasingly, from their first appearance in infancy and childhood, if the mother would not see them shoot up in boyhood and girlhood, overtopping and choking the growth of every supernatural, or even natural, virtue.

It would be a fatal neglect, one, in all likelihood, irreparable, to allow the babe to have its own way in everything. Wise mothers are careful to check the temper of their youngest infants, and they do succeed in making them acquire, even then, habits which ever after grow with their growth.

Even pagans looked upon the soul of the child as a something so mysterious, so deep, and so holy, as if a divine being tenanted the little helpless body, that they would have their babes treated with infinite reverence. We, Christians, know clearly what mighty spirit dwells within that regenerated soul; and we may divine somewhat of the workings and promptings of the Paraclete in his living tabernacle. Who of us, who has roamed in boyhood or early manhood through the solitudes of our great virgin forests, but has come unexpectedly upon a lovely

little lake, the parent spring of some lordly river, nestling in a secluded valley, with the great trees along its margin sending their roots down to drink of the pure waters; that margin itself fringed all around with wild flowers, while the calm, mirror-like bosom reflected the blue skies above, with their white or golden clouds, and the mighty hills which stood sentinels around to protect from intrusion or profanation all the sanctities of the place?

It is not a mere reflection of the heavens, or an image of the eternal hills, that the attentive and wondering mind can see within the pure passionless depths of the soul of infancy or childhood. We know that the God of that great temple we call the universe, the Spirit Creator and Sanctifier, is there Himself in person. What is the nature of his working within these mysterious depths of the child-soul? What foundations of mighty things to come is his hand lying beneath the untroubled surface of that life in its well-spring?

Mothers, the educated, the wealthy, the God-fearing, would do wisely to ask themselves such questions as these, when they gaze into the upturned face of their babe, and look down into these deep and fearless eyes, through which a glimpse is had of the mysterious infant world of thought and feeling within.

"Children, in their tabernacle, know the secrets, not of cities, not of human societies, not of history, but of God; their fair eyes are full of infinite sweetness; their little hands, joyous and blessed, have not committed evil; their young feet have never touched our defilement; their sacred heads wear an aureola of light; their smile, their voice, proclaim their two-

fold purity. Oh, the paradisiacal ignorance, coveted, perhaps, by angels, of all the errors which heresy has sown in later times! What cruelty to intercept the view of children by suffering their feet to get entangled in such briers, and their minds to be thus cankered, as is the bud bit with an envious worm, ere he can spread his sweet leaves to the air, or dedicate his beauty to the sun! Later they will not thank you; far happier had it sufficed them to have known good by itself, and evil not at all! As terns and other birds from arctic solitudes, when found flapping their long, silver tapering wings over our rivers that wind through woodlands and rich yellow meadows, show no fear of man, but keep close, hovering over the clowns who with stones and staves assail them, so these innocent souls, coming first amid the crowded haunts of life, are ignorant of evil, and of all dangers unsuspicious."*

THE MIND OF CHILDHOOD.

What seeds of salutary truth should the mother sow in this virgin soil, in order that its first vital vigour be given to the growth of immortal and divine fruits? What was said in the preceding chapter to illustrate the supernatural teaching of a Christian parent has, in a great measure, anticipated our answer to this question. Here, however, we have to descend to particulars.

"I remember," says Marina de Escobar, "that when I was a little girl, and did not know what was meant by mental prayer, I used to consider with great emotion the mysteries of the life of Christ."

* *Compitum*, B. I., c. ii., p. 31.

A young mother—we have the story from her own lips, of the blessed result of her early husbandry; others as well have been the witnesses—a very young mother, reared in her own honoured home in the paradisiacal innocence described above, once reasoned with herself as she looked down on the face of her infant daughter, her first child, lying on the rapt parent's knees: "Here I have, in this sweet soul more than a precious piece of marble to fashion into some glorious shape. What form can I give it now, which shall last for all time? With what sentiments can I imbue my darling which can best insure her happiness and everlasting worth? What should I have wished my mother to implant in my own soul as the principle of a goodness and a felicity superior to all that mind can think of or heart desire?" And, like a sudden flash of lightning amid the darkness, or a distinctly audible voice in a vast solitude, an interior answer came, *The Love of God!* Convinced that this was the response to the deepest wish of her heart, the young mother thenceforward set about watching for every sign of dawning intelligence in her babe, in order to make the notion of Him the first light which should enter there, and his name the first word uttered by the infant lips. Thus, from the first month after the birth of that heaven-sent child, its fond parent would hang over it, murmuring into its ears the fond wish that God should be first and last in its mind and heart, and that his love should be the light of its life evermore.

The Adorable Name, so far as mother's skill could effect it, was, indeed, stamped upon the child's soul. She was taught to thank Him for the motherly love

which surrounded her with an enchanted world, as well as for the father's doting fondness and all the comforts of home. There was not a beautiful thing, and the child's home was filled with such, in house, or in garden and field, that she was not made to look upon as a gift from that Love which never wearies in giving, but whose lavish hand ever makes of the treasures poured out to-day the sure pledge of the morrow's surpassing magnificence.

And thus was implanted in her little heart the early idea of

GENEROSITY.

For childhood is open to the notion of a Goodness which only measures its own gifts on the gratitude with which the receiver acknowledges them, and the generosity with which the fitting return is made. And so the generous love of the Divine Benefactor waxed stronger and stronger in the child, in the girl, in the accomplished maiden, who was the soul of every great and good work gotten up around her in favour of the poor and the suffering, till the close of her brief life of unsparing and self-sacrificing goodness.

At the age of three, necessity compelled a temporary separation from her mother and her home; but so firmly had the little heart been moulded to generous self-control and abnegation even then, that she feigned joyousness as she bade farewell to father and mother on the deck of the steamer, and once they were out of sight burst into an agony of tears. To her uncle's remonstrances the child could only reply, "Oh! I did not want to distress dear mamma!"

It was the same generosity which impelled her, when a wife and mother, to tear herself away from her worshipped parents, and cast her lot with her husband in a God-forsaken land. Though her young heart was breaking she would cheer all her dear ones as they clung around her at parting. In her new home, she felt called on to stir up in every soul brought within reach of her influence the zeal for God's name dishonoured, and for religion betrayed, and desecrated, and trampled upon, filling every home far and wide with the piety which burned so brightly in her own. And, crushed down by the death of her father, and prostrate on a bed of sickness, she no sooner learned that yellow fever had attacked her servants, than she found strength to rise and tend herself the plague-stricken, giving her life to the God of charity, and commending with her dying breath to his fatherly care her babes, her disconsolate husband, and the doting and thrice-afflicted mother thousands of miles away.

While the public was praising all the nobleness of a life thus sacrificed, the poor mother at home bethought her suddenly of the early inspiration to fill that soul with the love of God, and to make of the existence of her child one continuous act of generosity. In looking back upon the past she saw clearly the divine purpose, and, like the Mother of Sorrows on Calvary, she sought comfort and strength in taking to her heart the Crucified.

And so was fulfilled in one near our doors what a noble Spanish author said of himself long ago, when commenting the following text of Proverbs: "*I love them that love me: and they that in the morning early*

watch for me shall find me (Prov. viii. 17). "In the house of all other princes," Guevara says, "it is the custom never to open to early visitors, but persons must come after noon; whereas this passage shows us that those who would transact business with Christ should repair to Him at the dawn of their existence, and seek Him from their birth. O my God, my God, I confess it is true! 'I do not watch for Thee from the dawn;' but, on the other hand, Lord, Thou wilt not deny that I have been from my birth a Christian, and that ever since I have had any memory, I have named myself always thine."*

Yes, we all love what is freshest and earliest in nature: we love the first flowers of the spring, and the first tender bloom of spring itself as it spreads over forest and field; and there are those, the souls most sensitive to what is lovely and beautiful, who a filled with rapture by the first glories of dawn, the awakening of the great heart of nature to renewed life and joy at the approach of the glorious sun, and the first fragrance of the dewy meads and gardens as they scent the air with their first fresh odours, and the first voices of the grove as they burst into a full concert when light, God's great representative in the firmaments, begins to shine above the eastern hills. Pious souls love to give to God the first and freshest of all things, the first hours of the day, as well as the first dawn of their affections.

And does He, who made the human soul, set no store on what is most lovely and precious in our own

* Antonio de Guevara, *Epist.*, l. ii.

existence; the first thoughts of the infant mind at its dawn, the first love of the sweet and innocent heart of childhood? O mothers! make sure that these are consecrated to Him, and be certain, on your part, that what God can bestow of choicest graces shall be given you and yours in return.

We only pray that every mother who, while she reads these lines, has such a little daughter as the one dedicated so early to divine love, may teach her child to emulate herself in the early paths of piety and generosity. How sweet will it be to be able to say in after life:

> "She was all I had
> To love in human life—this playmate sweet,
> This child of seven years old—so she was made
> My sole associate, and her willing feet
> Wandered with mine."

JOYOUSNESS AND LOVE OF ENJOYMENT.

Most important is it not to check in childhood the manifestations of its joyous spirit which is ever ready to break forth as naturally as the brook runs sparkling in the sunlight and singing down its pebbly bed. This joyousness comes from the unconsciousness of wrong, the freedom from all care, and the perfect delight the little innocents find in all that is good and beautiful around them. To their sinless eyes all is bright and sunny, all is new and lovely, and as the garden of Paradise appeared to Adam and Eve innocent, so to these "every thing is very good."

Even when a little boisterous, it is well to let the current flow. Do not restrain it, or dam it up so near its source. Alas! the sweet years through

which it lasts will have passed away all too soon. We have only to look back to the interval between our own happy and headlong childhood, and the cares and sorrows which settled so darkly on our early youth, and we shall be convinced that our too brief early happiness or joyousness of spirit was but too like the crystal stream from the sierra, rushing down from its source in the uplands, with the early dawn, filling its bed with the clear, bounding waters, and becoming at noontide a fillet of sluggish, muddy water amid a waste of barren sand.

Encourage this bright spirit in your child; let its soul sing with all its strength while it may. Even the song of the nightingale ends long before the summer; and there will be a long, long season when not one note of love or praise will resound through the joyless grove and forest.

The keen zest for enjoyment must also be encouraged and directed. Children only see what is good, beautiful, and lovely in God's blessed world—that is, the children who are not cooped up between narrow and dark walls, and compelled to experience no necessities or no pleasures, but those of satisfying the craving for food, warmth, and sleep. They are the disinherited in God's rich and pleasant world; and it would be in vain to dwell at length here on the means of giving light, and air, and nourishment to these poor little starved buds of humanity.

We are speaking of children within whose reach are the usual sources of enjoyment. It is a blessed privilege for the mother to minister in every way she can to the delight and amusement of her dear ones. And one of the most beneficial industries of motherhood

is to provide all manner of sport and recreation for her children at home, and to see to it that they feast their senses on garden and field, and park and forest, as often as possible.

We are not of those who are enamoured with the modern methods of placing primers of natural history in the hands of children so soon as they are able to read words of one or two syllables. The love of nature and of all its exhaustless stores of beauty, and grandeur, and sublimity does not come to the human soul in this way. And, besides, we know that the new-fangled science which would make nature first, and middlemost, and last, is not the science that cares to set God before the mind of youth, either last, or first, or middlemost.

But you who believe that, without God, life would be a bitter road, ending nowhere, and this world a mad-house with a drunken manager, and man himself the most terrible of wild beasts, you will know how to make the spirit of your children joyous by teaching them that the life of heaven is joy without end, and that all the beautiful things with which their Maker has surrounded them in the firmament above and all over this wondrous earth, are only faint images of the beauties with which the infinite magnificence has decked out his and our eternal home.

Most true is it—and how the grateful soul swells in dwelling on it!—that this visible universe, and this most beautiful earth in the midst of it, are, with all their untold and incomprehensible splendours, but the tent set up by the emigrant to shelter himself and his dear ones, for the night, on their homeward

way. There may be in its furniture a few ornaments, one or two beautiful things, faint souvenirs of home; but they are at best but reminders of the wealth and glory, of the resting-place and permanent abode to which the travellers are journeying.

But, O Mother, whether you live in a palace or in a hovel, if your chief care be to have God ever live in your heart, his light within you will shed such unearthly beauty on all things that you will make your little ones see a fairy palace in this world, in spite of your own poverty and your life of hard labour. So, keep that light ever full in your child's soul; you both will need to believe in the bright world in which God dwells with his saints and angels, in order to forget the sights you have to behold in this. But even the dingy, dusty, noisome world of a crowded street, or the close workroom, or the long day in the factory, will appear clothed with unearthly charms when you remember the presence of angels with you there, and the splendours visible to the eye of faith, which are ever streaming down on this vale of toil and tears from between the opened gates of our Eternal Home.

Feed your own soul with joy, therefore, just as the bee gathers honey and treasures it up, that you may pour it out on your little angels, and keep them angels as long as you can, joyous, bright-eyed, bright-faced, and bright-tempered. Provided that you firmly believe in the angel-world, and in the presence of guardian angels in your own home, little harm will come of your children reading or learning fairy tales. It will be easy for you to explain to them how the popular fancy wove these

graceful stories out of the true history of man's fellowship with these angelic spirits from the beginning, and of the nearness to him of these other fallen spirits who are ever lying in wait for his ruin.

The chief aim in your sharing all joys and amusements with your dear ones should be to make them feel that your presence, your love is for them the source of all present happiness, and that they can come to your arms, to your heart at all hours, just as the weary labourers breaking stones along the highways of France can turn aside in their thirst, at any moment, to the nearest cool spring.

NEVER REPEL YOUR CHILDREN

when they approach you. They are drawn to you at first by the whole weight and bent of their nature; increase that attraction more and more by proving to them, through unruffled patience and a kindness which never varies, that your love, under God, is of all things the most needful to them, the most sweet, and the most unfailing. Child-nature must have been thwarted in some of its holiest inclinations when children fear to come to their mother with their every joy and grief, and doubt and care.

This sweet trust in a mother's unbounded and unwearied love is a wise and most necessary provision of nature. See how that nurse of all visible things (or, rather the all-wise Creator through her) lays up in the acorn the provision for the bud of the young oak during the first stage of its growth, and in the cocoa-nut the sweet and abundant nourish-

ment for the young palm-tree, or in the egg the plentiful food of the young bird till it bursts its shell and can provide for itself, or be fed for a time by its parents. But man has to depend through infancy, childhood, and youth on the love and fostering care of a mother's heart; and hence it is that God has filled a mother's heart with a living spring of tenderness and wisdom, which is to be the main reliance of the child, the young man or the young woman, not through all childhood and youth only, but so long as lasts a mother's life.

And corresponding to this is the need every child has of the incomparable treasure of a mother's heart, and the powerful attraction which draws one to a mother's bosom in one's manifold doubts, trials, and temptations.

A mother violates one of the Creator's most beautiful dispensations when she repels her child from her, and does not make all her dear ones grow up in the blessed experience that their mother's heart belongs, at all times, as wholly to each of them as if she lived for that one alone.

THE MYSTERY OF BAPTISMAL INNOCENCE PRESERVED IN SO MANY.

There are families, even in the midst of the most populous cities, and surrounded by an atmosphere of political and moral corruption, whose sons and daughters grow up to manhood and womanhood in absolute unconsciousness of the nature of moral evil, while mixing the while with the world of their own level, and possessing all the talents and accomplishments that can adorn the sphere in which they move.

This is no vague or unfounded assertion, thank God And we believe, moreover, that there are very many more such families and such beautiful souls than good people themselves are aware of.

Now, it may be laid down as a rule that in every such family the mother has been brought up herself in like sinlessness, and that she has been through life the trusted confidante of every one of her boys and girls, that from childhood upward their souls have been laid bare to her, every secret of their hearts made known to her.

THE MOTHER THE KEEPER OF HER CHILDREN'S HEARTS.

The true Christian mother will be such by the very force of nature, if she is only true to that great law of which mention has just been made. There will be no need of urging the boy or the girl, the young man or woman, to come to mother for advice or direction. A mother who is prying, or unwisely exacting, or deficient in tact, or lacking herself in spirituality or the supernatural character belonging to Christian motherhood, will not obtain this ascendency over her children, or draw them to her with that spontaneous and irresistible attraction exercised by the pure, the wise, the loving and devoted mother over every child of hers.

Nor will this beautiful and unreserved confidence, begotten of perfect love, interfere with the action of God's minister in the sacrament, as confessor and guide. Such mothers are his most valuable auxiliaries: they prepare chosen souls for the action of the divine graces.

HOW A SOLID RELIGIOUS CHARACTER IS FORMED.

It is such mothers as these whose enlightened piety will enable them to lay in the souls of their children the foundations of a solid religious character. They are careful to give to each practice of domestic or individual piety the importance which belongs to it. Their mind's eye takes in so clearly and vividly the infinite greatness of that Divine Majesty, in whose presence themselves and their dear ones are privileged to do service, that every practice of piety is deemed a thing of infinite importance; such mothers judge, and judge rightly, that nothing is little that is done for One so great, so loving, so magnificent in his generosity.

From the mind and heart of the mother, this sublime and true conception of the divine service, and of the piety which should be brought to it, passes into the souls and the lives of her children. Hence there will be, comparatively, but little danger of their neglecting in manhood and womanhood the practices of devotion made so sweet in childhood, or of their failing in that reverential awe in approaching the divine presence which was instilled at their mother's knee.

PIETY FOUNDED ON PRINCIPLE, HOW LASTING.

Piety, grounded like this, by a true mother, on the very substance of a child's intellectual and moral nature, will not be likely to be shaken or overturned in after-life. It is impossible, where all that is most delightful in the knowledge of God, and in one's earliest fellowship with Him, and with his bright court of angels and saints on high, have been wound

up in the pure joys of childhood, and the most rapturous visions of youth, that the hollow maxims of worldly wisdom, or the sneers of the unbeliever, the voices of one's equals, or the scandal of example within the sanctuary itself, can detach such a soul from its allegiance to God. Where religion has penetrated with the light of its principles the whole of man's or woman's intelligence, and made the heart strong and happy by its practice, the inconsistencies of its professors or its ministers cannot have the effect of killing the roots of faith in mind or heart.

So, let mothers who read this be encouraged to make themselves all in all to their dear ones in their practices of piety, as in their amusements, in every pursuit, in every enjoyment, in every trial and difficulty, persuading themselves firmly, all the while, that God is with them doing their work, which is, after all, his own dearest and most glorious work. They are sanctifying their own home, and filling it with God; at the same time He will fill themselves and their children with his light and joy.

Yes, in the "chaste obscurity" of a home where a true mother moves, the embodiment of all that religion holds to be most lovely to the interior sense, men of the world will not feel repelled as they might by the austerity of the cloister, but attracted and subdued by all the virtues and graces which they behold shining, with such "softened glory," in the lives of parents and children.

BE INVARIABLY CHEERFUL.

We must have failed to convey our true meaning in what has just been said about the inculcation of

early piety, if any shadow of gloom is thought to rest, even for a moment, on the home of the true Christian mother, any more than on her own brow, or the brows of her little angels. Oh, no! Piety is ever joyous, sunny, and bright; and, as to the mother, even when she is suffering or burdened with care, or carrying in her heart a heavy load of grief, she must put the cloud away from her when in presence of her dear ones. There are generous husbands and fathers who never allow their business cares to cross their threshold; they leave them at the doorstep, and go into their home-sanctuary with unclouded face, and warm smiles, and words of love for all. They will not have the storm which pelts their own hearts so mercilessly in the outside world, make its mutterings heard near the warm nest where wife and children are sheltered. So must it be with respect to the mother and her household cares and difficulties; let them never be known to her children.

KEEP OUT GOSSIP AND SCANDAL.

Much more careful ought she be to close her doors against mere idle gossip; and still more so to exclude the echoes of the scandals which are rumoured abroad. Hence the necessity of selecting carefully the circle of those who are to be admitted to the intimacy of the home. Not all who call on the mother are fit persons to converse with the children. Not all who consider themselves to be on a footing of friendship with either parent are safe friends for children, who have never yet beheld evil, or heard the sound of its voice. The acquaintance with it must always come

too soon: it is the inevitable misfortune which a watchful mother will stave off as long as possible.

We once remember a stranger who had been warmly recommended to an admirable family, and who had been welcomed to all the hospitalities of the home. It was soon apparent, however, that he was not what he pretended to be, or his outside friends had represented him. The evening had passed, and honour had been done to the guest, when someone, in presence of the younger children, made a remark unfavourable to the stranger. This called forth an indignant rebuke from the mistress of the house, who reminded the offender that, as she never intended to invite the stranger again, such censure was needless; and that, moreover, it was unpardonable, as she never allowed anyone admitted to the family circle, even for the once, to be spoken of unkindly.

And this naturally brings us to say how scrupulous mothers ought to be to discountenance everything approaching or leading to

UNCHARITABLENESS.

On this point the true mother must be inflexible. We suppose her to be thoroughly enlightened with regard to the transcendent excellence of charity, that divine virtue, practised after the manner of the Master who gave Himself to us, who shields from every eye our own unworthiness, and treats our guilty souls with such infinite reverence in his merciful methods of reconciliation: we suppose that the true Christian woman, with that deep sense, characteristic of her sex, of all that is most divine in humility, as

well as in charity, ever keeps before her mind the knowledge of God's infinite liberality towards her soul, and of her own very inadequate return. This conviction of the infinitude of that love so unsparing of itself and its graces, and of her own indebtedness to the divine benefactor, will prevent her from looking down on others; from judging, or, still less, despising even the most guilty.

It is one thing for Christian parents to keep away from the innocent souls intrusted to them all persons known to be not edifying, or open to serious suspicion, and quite another thing to allow such persons to be spoken of in their home. Such persons should not be admitted to the intimacy of the home-circle;—that is a matter of prudence, most frequently of absolute necessity; but no less imperative is it that the faults, the failings, or the conduct of others should never, under any pretext, be made the subject of conversation in the family.

The mother is queen there; her will, in all that pertains to the proprieties and the charities of life, no one, not even her husband, should be permitted to question. Indeed, we suppose, in what we say here, that both parents have long ago resolved to be of one mind on this as on all such matters. Whosoever, therefore, should dare to trespass, by word or bearing, against the cardinal virtues of the home, should be rebuked by the mother and mistress.

It is a mistake to allow the fear of offending, or making an enemy, to prevent one from doing one's duty. The person ungenerous enough to take offence at a remonstrance gently, delicately, but firmly administered would be got rid of very cheaply. The

generous-minded, who are often led to gossip inadvertently, by custom, or the desire to please, will only conceive a higher respect for that home, and a deeper esteem for its mistress.

We know of more than one person who has been radically cured of uncharitableness by the firm but gentle rebuke of a mother at her own table.

As to making enemies; when a mother has used tact, courtesy, and a gentle firmness in repressing scandalous gossip or uncharitable conversations, she must trust to the innate sense of right and duty in the persons rebuked, as well as to God's good care of her home and its welfare.

A person in authority having been persuaded by some gossips who had his ear, that a lady visiting in a family very dear to him was unworthy of such intimacy, thought himself bound to warn the mistress of the home. She listened without answering one word, perfectly certain that her informant had been imposed upon by mischief-makers. Six months afterwards he came back with a conscience very much troubled, and begged to know how far the information he had given, and which deeply affected the moral character of the person aspersed, had been communicated to others, determined, as he said, to repair the injury done, no matter how widely it might have spread. "Have no fear," the prudent and charitable lady replied; "I have not even mentioned the subject to my husband; indeed, I could not in conscience do so, knowing that the report you heard was pure calumny."

This is the rule of the saints, never to mention what is or may be detrimental to another, except

when it is necessary to do so for the welfare of that other, or to shield the innocent from the imminent danger of contagion. It is related in the life of St. Ignatius Loyola, that, in the discharge of his office of superior-general of the great society he had founded, he received serious charges against one of his subordinates. He immediately laid the subject of complaint before his council. At his nightly examination of conscience it occurred to him that he might have brought about an effective amendment in the other's misconduct by a reproof, privately administered, and without discussing the matter with anybody; at any rate, his conscience seemed to tell him that it had been, at the utmost, quite enough to consult one or two persons, without exposing a brother's infirmity to a larger number.

In his grief he scourged himself most severely for what he considered a serious want of discretion, if not of charity, and then lay down. But he could find no rest, and had to rise and awaken his confessor, though it was past midnight, before whom he laid his fault, with many tears and bitter self-accusation.

We must not be tempted to accuse these great and holy souls of excessive rigour towards themselves, or of unduly exaggerating faults comparatively slight, and committed, as in this last instance, through a little precipitancy at most. When we reflect how much mischief, fatal and irreparable mischief, may be done by judging hastily and speaking rashly, we shall be slow to condemn St. Ignatius, and feel disposed to judge ourselves rather, and call ourselves to account for making light of matters in which the neighbour's good name is concerned. It is, some may

think, but a trifling imprudence, while passing through a field of ripe corn, to cast away thoughtlessly the end of a lighted cigar. Perhaps he who did so never bestows a further thought on the matter till he hears, on the morrow, that the poor farmer's crop has been ruthlessly swept away by fire, that his little home shared a like fate, while he and his family barely escaped with their lives.

Alas! we know by the experience of all time that slander, beginning in a thoughtless word, spreads as rapidly as fire in the ripe corn; and that while the field thus ravaged may bear a richer crop next year, and while the burned cottage may rise from its ruins, nothing can adequately repair the ravages of uncharitableness, or build up anew a reputation ruined by an evil, an idle, or a foolish tongue!

So let the mothers for whom we write add the horror of uncharitableness and impropriety, of every kind, to the joyous and bright spirit with which they train their children during this first stage; and what a preparation will be made for the thorough education of the noble boys and noble girls who are soon to develop into the full perfection of manhood and womanhood!

CHAPTER. X.

THE BOYS AND GIRLS IN THE LABOURER'S HOME.

Deep as ever must be the sympathy of a priestly heart for both parents and children in the home of the labouring man, and solicitous as every true priest must be of the future of these little ones born to toil and hardship, it is principally with the much-tried father and mother that his concern lies. Theirs is the hard and often hopeless battle of the present; and worthy of the admiration of men and angels is the struggle they make to keep suffering away from their nestful, or to provide for their dear ones comforts, education, and a position in life from which they had themselves been debarred.

We do not mean in thought and affection to separate such praiseworthy parents in what we have to say: sure are we that every father will bless our endeavour to make the burden of the laborious mother lighter, her task more pleasant and easy, and her everyday path of duty less rugged and thorny. It is the feet of such as she is that "must ache and bleed beneath" her load: it is the ever-busy hands of such a mother that, "weak or strong," must work at her unceasing task through "such long years!"

Nor, near as the writer may be "to the wayside inn," shall he yield to any sense of weariness after having "toiled so much with voice and pen," but put his whole heart in his present effort to cheer and enlighten so many mothers who have the long road of life all before them.

COURAGE AND GENEROSITY OF LABOURING WOMEN.

Those only who have gone habitually among the families of our labouring classes, who have their full confidence, and are initiated into all their secrets, can know what treasures of goodness, of generosity, of courage, and patience are concealed by the homely or patched garb of a mother with five or six mouths to feed, and not always a crown a day to count on for rent, clothing, and other incident expenses in the poorest of homes. While we write these lines, such is the outlook in the households of most labouring men of this great metropolis and the adjacent cities. Such, if we mistake not, is the hard lot of most fathers and mothers in manufacturing centres, and all through the Eastern States.

And this has been the condition of the labouring man among us for years, and such the miserable pittance from out which his wife has had to provide necessaries and comforts for the entire family, with something also for the poor and the Church! If persons more favoured by fortune and unvisited by such pinching want as is described in this simple statement ever felt disposed to blame such a mother, or to turn away with loathing from the inevitable

squalor in home, and dress, and countenance of these toilers for our comfort and luxury, let them pause and reflect.

There is more of heroic endurance in the heart of such a parent than in the bosom of the bravest soldier in a beleaguered and famished city. There is in such a life of incessant battling with the wants of the day and the hour, with the fears of what the morrow may bring forth, a fortitude and perseverance far above our sterile admiration. When one has seen much of such homes and such hearts, one begins to understand why the soul of the Master went forth to these toilers with this sublime exordium of his first recorded discourse: "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven!" This was to point their eyes heavenward to the certain prospect of a rest and a reward which the present could not afford. But He would not have them devoid, amid their long and ever-recurring daily struggle, of the sweetest consolation and most coveted recompense of generous souls. "Come to me, all you that labour, and I will refresh you!"

DIVINE AID IN DIRE NEED.

In such a family, and during a long and severe winter, when labour was scarce, provisions dear, and charity as frozen as the lakes and rivers, a poor father of seven children fell on the ice, while returning home after dark, and broke his leg. His youngest babe was but six weeks old, and the mother was in very feeble health. It was thought, inflammation having set in, that the fractured member would have

to be cut off; but the poor sufferer would not consent to the operation till he had made his confession. What a spectacle was that poor home, when the priest, following the oldest child, a boy of eleven, reached the door at midnight during a fierce snow-storm! A loft or garret served as a sleeping-room for the elder children, and the lower part of the wooden shanty contained a little kitchen in front, with a bedroom for father and mother behind it. There were three physicians, one of whom was a surgeon, present and awaiting impatiently the arrival of the priest. The house was a picture of neatness, and the bedroom, especially, in which the poor sufferer lay, was like an oratory, curtained with spotless white, with a large and very old engraving of Christ carrying his cross, by Raphael, over the bed, and so placed that the patient might look at it. The wife, overcome with grief, struggled hard, when the priest entered, to keep back her tears. After the usual salutations and a few words of comfort to herself and her husband, the latter, seizing the priest's hand, exclaimed, as he looked towards the picture: "Father, I know that He will be with me and with her, too! That beautiful face has been like a book to me for many a year: I could look on it forever! But, sure, I know"—and the speaker's voice trembled with emotion—"that the real face is more beautiful than the sun, and that the heart we were all taught to come to is one that will pity the poor man . . . and the widow . . . (here he broke down). . . . and the little orphans." Even the stern face of the surgeon quivered with an emotion he could not suppress while these sentiments were uttered in a firm, low tone.

During the operation, the children were taken to a neighbouring house, all but the infant, which remained with its mother, and she could not be persuaded to leave the house, praying in the outside room with one of the neighbouring women. Ether was then in common use, but the sick man would not take it: he held, instead, the priest's crucifix in both hands, which the physicians left free, and with his eyes intensely fixed on the thorn-crowned head, while the inner sight seemed to behold somewhat of the divine reality, the sufferer gave himself up to the surgeon. Not a murmur escaped the silently moving lips, till towards the end, when the pain wrung one groan from him, and his head fell back in a swoon on the priest's shoulder.

A few days afterwards a crisis came, and the worst was feared. The last sacraments were administered—the wife seeming to have gained sudden and preternatural strength from the very extremity to which her brave husband was reduced. "She knew," she assured the priest, ere he left the house, "that God would not try her further: something whispered to her heart that her good man would be left to her." He was, as usual, heroic in his calm submission to the Divine Will: only—such were his words—he prayed to be left a little longer with his young children. The picture ("The Spasimo" of Raphael) had been taken down from the wall and lay on the white covering of the bed, and the beautiful face of the humiliated Redeemer was the book in which the sick man read night and day.

The next morning the priest returned, expecting to hear that all was over. But, to his unspeakable

surprise, the wife met him on the threshold with countenance all aglow with rapturous gratitude, and said that her husband was better. "Oh! so much better!" It was wonderful. The patient had slept sweetly, had even lost consciousness while gazing at his loved picture, and dreamed that Christ had come to him as he lay sore, and weary, and faint by the roadside, and had smiled on him, blessed him, and shown him the gap in his own side, and then disappeared.

So, when the burden was heaviest on these stricken ones, He who bade us go to Him in our extremity, and who yearns to reward our faith, even by miracles when needful, had stretched out his hand and opened his heart to the call of that husband and that wife.

Theirs was a long and a brave battle thenceforward. But every trial seemed light to souls so near to God. The brave man applied himself to learn a trade—he had been hitherto a stevedore; and, though there was never surplus of money or of creature-comforts in that home, there was contentment, and love purified in the furnace, and noble children to gladden the hearts of struggling parents, and that piety which seemed as natural as the very air they breathed.

TREASURES TO BE FOUND IN THE POOREST HOMES.

Yes, there are poor homes, laborious homes, where from earliest dawn till night, and often far into the night, the wife and mother has to work, work, work, without cessation or repose, to do the house-work, and, that done, to complete some other task from the outside, in order to help the ill-paid husband to keep off or pay off debts, to have decent rai-

ment for the good man and his children, to keep some at least of these at school, to have substantial food for all, and something for the need of the suffering poor, who know well her door as well as her heart:—and such mothers *believe* that God's eye is ever on themselves and their dear ones, that his blessed angels are there counting every hour and minute of that loving toil, counting every beat of these generous hearts, every moment so well filled, and ascending at night to lay the record of such a day before Him who said, "Blessed are the poor! . . . For theirs is the kingdom of heaven!"

Blood tells, it is said, when noble deeds are to be performed—that is, perhaps, when the eyes of men watch the performance; but there is inherited piety, which is a something nobler still—the supernatural piety of Christians. Are we not born, in our second sacramental birth, of the blood of a God-man? Think of this, brave-hearted mothers, and remember it is that blood which is applied to us in every grace we receive, and which strengthens us to do the work before us.

Your boys, your girls, must be trained early to be industrious. Not that they must be set to work before their time; God forbid! But it must be your care to give them, from the very beginning, habits of cleanliness, order, industry, self-respect, and self-reliance. You must be careful not to allow them to fancy for one moment that there is in your own laborious habits, or in their father's occupation or trade, anything that is not most honourable, praiseworthy, and pleasing to God.

TEACH YOUR CHILDREN THE DIGNITY OF LABOUR.

Recall to them frequently that the most glorious names in heaven or on earth were those of men and women whose daily life was one of toil like your own: how Adam, and the great patriarchs who succeeded him, were tillers of the soil, husbandmen, and shepherds; that such were the great men and women who founded God's people in the Old Law—Abraham and Sara, Isaac and Rebecca, Israel (or Jacob) and his wife, Rachel, Joseph, who ruled Egypt after having been, like his brothers, a farmer and a shepherd, as well as Moses, the figure of our Lord, who kept the flocks of his father-in-law. Labour was most honoured, always, down to the days of our Lord, who Himself learned the carpenter's trade, and worked at it with his foster-father, Joseph, a prince of the royal blood of David.

Teach them to look upon idleness as a shame and disgrace, upon sloth as most degrading, and as leading to all manner of evil courses. You can always keep them joyous children, while you make them industrious and laborious children; you can make them and keep them bright, pleasant-faced, and cheerful, while coaxing them to learn something new every day, and to apply themselves heartily to the tasks you set for them at the appointed hours.

KNOW HOW TO PRAISE THEM.

We have already seen what good a true wife can do by praising generously and judiciously her husband, and encouraging him thereby to rise every day higher and higher in her esteem and in his own.

Far greater is the good she can do everyone of her children by judicious praise. We say "judicious," for praise bestowed at every moment and for trifles loses its value by becoming common. Praise only when something is done which deserves it, and praise in well-weighed words. Never give praise when it is not well deserved; for then it would be unjust, and you would make your children suspect your truthfulness and your honesty.

BE GENTLE, LOW-VOICED, AND PATIENT.

Be gentle. That does not mean to be spiritless. It means to be the opposite of violent, irascible, ill-tempered, and moody. Study to be so, for your own soul's sake, and as if you lived in God's presence always keeping down, for his holy love, every movement of anger, irritability, ill-temper, or moodiness. And be gentle, precisely because you have much to do, much to bear, many cares to burden you, many things which continually try your temper.

Be low-voiced. It is wonderful what effect a mother's gentle manner and low voice, when she teaches, or corrects, or praises, will have on a band of children. Take a school-room filled with very young boys or girls. Let their teacher be nervous, fidgety, and irritable; you will see all these little ones thrown into a ferment, and fever, and agitation, which is nothing more than a kind of disorder which they catch from the teacher's manner. Let her be loud-voiced, teaching, or speaking in loud, quick, nervous tones, and it is ten to one but you will see within a few minutes all these children becoming restless, talkative, inattentive, and ungovernable.

Now, let some gentle, quiet, calm-mannered, and low-voiced person come in, and all these children will become quieted, stop talking, listen, and be ready to give their whole attention to what is said, or to set to work, and work steadily as long as the calm eye is on them, and the gentle, low voice is directing them.

You will spare yourselves and your dear ones much trouble and much unhappiness by laying this lesson to heart. You can do what you like with them, if you are perfectly mistress of yourself. Besides, what a service you do *them;* and how they will bless their mother in after-life for having taught them this gentleness!

Be patient, not only when you are suffering from aching limbs, and head, and heart, but when you do not succeed in making your dear ones all that you would wish. There are certain dispositions and characters which seem naturally to defy all control, or teaching, or improvement. They will learn more than you think; and they profit much more than you can see by your lessons, and especially by your example. Even should son or daughter of yours turn out to be everything but what you trained them to be, the memory of their gentle, patient, loving mother will remain in their souls to their dying day, like a silent voice from the past bidding them return to God, and to the paths of their childhood.

Some say that steel beaten into its due form, and given a keen edge while cold, is more apt to preserve both form and edge for ever. So is it with the temper your patient gentleness will impart to your children's souls. And this firmness, which is only

one of the most precious dispositions of true manhood and womanhood, will be both of infinite value to them, and of indispensable necessity.

IN WHAT CONSISTS TRUE INDEPENDENCE OF CHARACTER.

To no one more than the child of the hard-working mother is true independence of soul—that is, true nobility of character—necessary and useful. Indeed, the all-seeing Author of our nature, who governs all our ways, has made every element of greatness in our souls and conduct necessary, because he knew they would be useful; and he made them all the more necessary that he foresaw they would be more useful.

In what does this independence of soul and character consist? In this: that a boy or a girl brought up by a truly God-fearing mother, is so filled with the fear of that Great Majesty, in whose hands we are at every moment, and into whose hands we are sure to fall after death, that they look up to Him in everything, seek to please Him in all they do, and find it impossible to do anything which is wrong in his sight, and contrary to the voice of their own conscience.

Let us understand this well. You rear your boy and your girl, from the very first moment you can make them understand anything, in the conviction that God's truth, God's word, God's will is to be the sole measure by which they are to weigh and estimate everything; so that it will be practically impossible for them to do anything contrary to his truth, his law, or his will. We say every day that such a

man is a noble man, a truly independent man, because he is incapable of doing wrong to anyone, of violating truth, or honour, or honesty, of going, in anything whatever, against his conscience and his known duty.

Hence it is, and this is the golden lesson which our forefathers learned so well and practised so nobly, that they made their moral greatness and independence consist.

IN DEPENDING ON GOD ALONE AND THEIR CONSCIENCE.

They were poor in this world's goods; for they had been stripped of everything: they were deprived of civil and religious liberty, and honour, and were thus, in the eyes of men, degraded to the level of the serf or the slave. But nothing could shake their dependence on God, or their implicit and invincible obedience to the voice of their conscience and their faith.

Now, such are the noble men and women that can in our days, in this generation as in the next, go forth from the home of every labouring man among us, as they went forth in past generations: men attached to conscience, to honesty, to honour, to truth, to duty, to righteousness, and to God, in all things, and above all things, everywhere, in all employments and positions, though never so high or never so lowly.

Let us have men and women incapable of telling a lie, of wronging the neighbour in thought, or word, or deed, of wronging their employer in the meanest trifles or the weightiest matters, of betraying the trust placed in them, whether in the last place in

lowliest office, or in the highest that can be given in city, State, or Church—men and women who fear God alone, and, after Him, fear only what is contrary to truth, honour, and purity!

Dear mothers who read this, you may never be able to give your boys and girls, at your death, wherewith to buy a suit of clothes, or to pay for their meals on the morrow. But if you laboured morning, noon, and night, till your dying day—because you would allow no dishonesty to taint your lives, and for the sole purpose of making of your children such godlike men and women as this—you have left them a treasure ten thousand times more precious than all the hoarded millions of our wealthiest.

MAKE THEM CHOOSE THEIR COMPANIONS WELL.

In order to do this, you must be careful about two things: the choice of what your boys and girls read; and that of their companions at home, or in the street.

Choose well the books which you put in their hands, or which you permit them to bring hom ewith them. Public libraries are like druggists' shops or public dispensaries; they are like them in this, that they contain all manner of poisons as well as healthful medicines; and they differ from them in this, that, whereas conscientious druggists will give what is healthful to all, they will only deal out what is poisonous in small quantities, and to responsible and properly authorised persons; while libraries and librarians have no conscience, and let the innocent child take away and devour what kills purity, innocence, and conscience forever.

Scarcely less baneful are, taken and read promiscuously, the daily and weekly papers. They are not only dangerous and hurtful to the young mind and heart as mere *newspapers*, because they reveal in their hideousness and obscenity what should never be known to youth, and what were better ignored by age itself; but they are still more hurtful as teachers and dogmatisers on religion and morality, either reducing the doctrines and practices of revealed religion to the same level with infidelity, and thus producing practical indifference towards divine truth, or they affect, and profess to have an authority which can judge the Church of Christ herself, and enlighten her as to the way she ought to teach, and to govern.

Thereby the mind is imperceptibly, but inevitably, filled with prejudices or preconceived opinions distrustful of the Church, or hostile to her, and which act on the intelligence as the foul and poisonous air of coal mines acts on the lungs: they fill the organs with deadly exhalations, which prevent the entrance into them of God's pure vital air.

Just as you are careful of what books or papers your children read, even so be watchful over the companionships they form. It is impossible to take kindly to the low-minded, corrupt-hearted, or ill-bred and ill-mannered, without laying aside one's own good manners, good breeding, purity of feeling, and innocence of mind in habitual intercourse with them. There are worse consequences, as you know, which soon follow this familiarity with the low and the unworthy.

Precisely because the great majority of young

people around you are without sound moral education, untruthful, intemperate, and as careless of honour and honesty as they are of decency, it is your most pressing interest and duty to keep your treasures away from such contact.

CHAPTER XI.

HOW MOTHERS SHOULD TRAIN THEIR BOYS AND GIRLS (CONTINUED).

THE best preservative against the dangerous ambition described in our last is found in the supernatural notions and virtues which a Christian mother is careful to inculcate from the earliest dawn of reason in her children. We insist once more upon it; the royal and rich poverty of Christ, of his Mother, and of his foster-father, Joseph, must be made the theme of constant remark and praise in the homes of tradesmen and labouring men. And, next to that, the mother must fill the souls of her little ones with that scorn and loathing of all dishonesty and untruthfulness, which will, with the ever-present aid of grace, render them incapable of telling a lie, or wronging any person, no matter how slightly.

CHILDREN TO BE TAUGHT SIMPLICITY IN DRESS AND SOBRIETY IN FOOD.

This is another golden rule to be enforced early. Nor need we, while the passion for rich attire, showy ornaments, and jewellery is developed so precociously in our girls, and allowed by mothers to grow unrepressed and unrebuked, point out how timely and needful this rule is.

A venerable lady, who died in November, 1870, in her seventy-second year, and who came of the best blood of England, wrote thus, in her last years, of her early training: "The dress of these days (about 1806) was very different to that which children have now. My white frocks were of lawn or Irish cloth, without any work or ornament; and when I went out I used to wear a little green-baize coat. My food was also of the simplest kind, consisting principally of buttermilk and potatoes."*

The girlhood trained in these habits of simplicity and wholesome austerity led to a lovely womanhood, to a life of spotless devotion to duty, and to the exercise of these private graces and influences which enable a woman, ever living in the privacy of her home, to win the admiration, the respect, and the veneration of all who approach her. We quote her words and her example to show how women were brought up in the days of our fathers, and how little difference, even in Protestant homes, the deep-seated Christian customs of so many preceding centuries allowed to prevail in the dress, the food, and all the external training of children in all classes.

Mothers in those days, who wished to do their duty conscientiously by their children, did not dream of having for them in the beginning any teachers but themselves. So was it with this lady's mother; although prostrated by paralysis and consumption, she would daily teach her little girl.

"She taught me in all my lessons except French, but her weak health and bad headaches often pre-

* Augustus J. C. Hare, "Memorials of a Quiet Life," vol i., p. 6.

vented her hearing me, and many a time I had to stand outside her door waiting till I could be heard, which fretted me a good deal. When the lessons went ill, I was sentenced to sit on the staircase till I was good, and the task perfect. I imagine that though my mother was most gentle, she was firm in her management of me." Some lady-friend having "suggested my doing something because it would be *pleasant*, my mother appealed to me, 'I think my little girl has a better motive for it. What is it, Mia?' and 'Because it is *right*,' was my reply."*

HOW EARLY THE SENSE OF DUTY—OF RIGHT AND WRONG, IS FOUND IN CHILDREN.

The answer given by the child shows how early what philosophers call "the moral sense" is developed in a child, in little girls especially, whose intelligence is so much more precocious than that of boys, and whose sense of right and wrong is much quicker and keener. The sick, hopelessly sick and infirm mother here mentioned, while cultivating her child's memory and understanding by teaching her the usual elementary branches, was careful to form her judgment by making her, in all things, act for a purpose, and to develop her moral sense by giving her, in all she did, the notion of duty, as her stimulant in doing both pleasant and unpleasant things.

THE MORAL SENSE IS BUT THE SENSE OF DUTY.

Duty is the fulfilling of an obligation towards one's self, or towards another in compliance with his will,

* *Ibidem*, p. 4.

who, being Creator and Lord, has a right to bind our wills to do certain things and refrain from others.

Duty is always towards God, even when the immediate object of the action performed is only one's self, or one's neighbour. The very duty of cultivating mind and heart, which regards every intelligent being, is a duty imposed by the Divine Will; so is the obligation to keep one's soul and body free from every defilement. We own it to be a duty to learn, to know clearly and fully what concerns our condition, our profession, or the office we may hold in Church or State, and a corresponding duty to live up to this indispensable knowledge. But Christian philosophy teaches us that in acquiring this knowledge, and in acting up to it, we are only doing what is *due* to Him who has an essential right to every thought and aim and act of ours.

Uprightness is the perfect performance of duty; and uprightness, in its Christian and supernatural meaning, is the perfect discharge of duty in view of Him who is our Lord and Judge and final Beatitude. The firm look of the soul, in every act of duty, or in the gratuitous generosity with which the sons of God go beyond what is of obligation—is upward to God.

CULTIVATE THIS SENSE OF DUTY

in all your children. Make them understand tha they are to do certain things most unpleasant, and to abstain from other things most pleasant, because *it is right to do so;* because it is their *duty;* because this is due to their great and good God. Experience has taught that of all characters, in men as well as in women, the most trustworthy, the most

honoured, the most noble in the estimation of mankind, is the man or woman who always acts according to this sense of duty, and whom no love, no fear, no passion, or temptation can turn aside to do wrong—that is, what is contrary to duty and conscience.

If mothers will only accustom their children to act, not according to their inclinations, but in obedience to this sense of duty, pointing out what is right to do and what is wrong not to do, they will buckle round them a suit of armour which will enable them to come victorious out of the terrible battle of temptation. And never was this noble sense of duty more needed than in our day, when men think little of right or wrong, and a good deal of the surest and quickest road to success; and when, in the estimation of our public, success once attained makes the wrong right, while failure makes right itself wrong, and the sacrifice to duty foolish sentimentality.

CULTIVATE THE HEARTS OF YOUR CHILDREN.

This is more particularly needful in the case of your girls.

It is by the right or wrong in their affections that women become so powerful for good or evil. Not that their intelligence is naturally inferior to that of men; on the contrary, in many respects the female intellect is remarkably superior. Intelligence dawns earlier in girls, and ripens at a very precocious age. Hence the wisdom of cultivating the judgment and forming the imagination of girls during their fifth, sixth, and seventh years. One will often be

astonished in conversing with a little girl of that age, on questioning her closely, to see (when she has been carefully watched by an intelligent and virtuous mother) how completely she will master the great scheme of the creation, the fall, the redemption and reparation, the necessity of a visible and infallible teaching authority, the beauty of the sacramental system of help towards all the purposes of the supernatural life in the individual soul as well as in the body of the Church. All this can be made so clear and so attractive to the childish intellect, without wearying it with theological terms or definitions.

The idea of God is connatural to the mind, as well as that of his providence, of moral good and evil, of rewards and punishments. No child but can be made to ascend from the familiar notion of her father's house, well governed by firm laws, by love tempered with justice, to the great family of nations under one Almighty Ruler and Judge. These and a thousand other notions are so quickly taken in by the youngest girl, that one is reminded forcibly of the famous theories about innate ideas.

It is impossible in a really Christian family that the head should be wrong if the heart is right. The teaching of the Church is so complete, embraces in one firm grasp our origin in the past, our duties in the present, and our prospects for all time and eternity; our doctrines are so positive, so clear, so satisfactory, and so comprehensive that they set the mind at rest, and thereby leave the soul free to direct and control its own affections.

Generally speaking, boys and girls in Catholic families have such a clear sense both of what they

have to believe and what they have to do, that when they are led astray it is by their affections.

We have explained in the preceding chapter how mothers are to win and to keep the love of their boys and girls. This is one necessary step towards cultivating their hearts and training their affections. You cannot repair or beautify the interior of a house unless you secure an entrance and be in so far the master in it that no one shall disturb you while you are occupied in your labour. The heart has been endowed by its Maker with so mysterious and so great a power, that even a babe in arms can shut its heart against its own parent, and that a child of seven can form, rightly or wrongly, likings and dislikings which may last a lifetime.

It is for the mother to study from the very beginning the dispositions of her precious charge. We say commonly that some natures are richly endowed, and others but poorly; that some persons are all head and no heart, while others are all heart and no head. That is to say, there are souls in which the intellectual powers seem to predominate and to absorb into themselves the affective powers; while there are others in whom the affections seem to run away with the understanding and the judgment.

There is some truth and a good deal of exaggeration in these estimates which we pride ourselves in forming of the innate faculties of children as well as of grown-up persons. Doubtless, through some physical accident of formation, or birth, the brain may be affected and the reasoning powers partially or almost totally paralysed; but there is no instance of this total paralysis of the will or the executive

and affective powers in the soul where the mind retains its full vigour unimpaired. Some persons are less sensitive, less affectionate, less imaginative, less passionate than others; but in all persons of sane mind there is imagination, and sensibility, and affections, and passions, though in very different degrees of intensity.

Now where a faculty or special power in the soul is known to exist, it can be developed, strengthened, increased almost indefinitely by exercise and proper culture; just as a faculty neglected either dies out or lives on in a sort of rudimentary condition for want of proper exercise. The hand and arm of one man becomes as terrible an instrument of destruction as the arm of the tiger, by long muscular training. While another man, though more powerfully built by nature, will have a hand as soft as a babe's, and an arm as feeble as a girl's, from the absolute lack of exercise. Women, above all other persons, are familiar with the success which so often attends the cultivation and development of the voice, and how young persons, seemingly deficient in all aptitude for singing, will exhibit, under careful culture and practice, the most splendid vocal powers.

"HEARTLESSNESS" THE EFFECT OF A WRONG EDUCATION.

There is no such thing as natural heartlessness. Cold as certain grown-up women, as well as men, seem to be by nature, we may be certain that neither nature nor its Author is to blame for this lack of genial warmth and affection. No child is born without the disposition to love and the power of loving

warmly: this may be not so apparent at the surface in some children as in others, or exist in the same degree of energy; or, again, this coldness in some may be only such as contrasted with the passionate and impulsive fervour of others. But let mothers rest assured that the heart is there, with its natural and essential powers of returning love for love, and of practising, not only the virtue of supernatural charity so indispensable to the sanctity and salvation of the adult Christian, but all the other charities of private and public life, with the many virtues which never fail to adorn the soul in which true charity reigns. Indeed were it possible (which is not so) that any human being could be born without natural affection, the Creator Spirit, coming into the soul in baptism, would most surely repair the defect.

But comparatively feeble (and we use this expression most reluctantly) as the power of loving may be supposed to be, it *is* there in the soul for the mother's tender hand and fostering charity to nurse into fulness of life, into perfect bloom and fruitful maturity. And God's abundant and unfailing help is secured to the mother in this training of her child's heart.

But the real heartlessness which shows itself so offensively in the girl and in the woman is, you may be sure of it, the result of neglect in the parent, or of a training in every way vicious.

For this heartlessness is but undisguised selfishness obtruding itself upon us in all its own repulsive deformity. The mother's eye had failed to detect this weed in her child's soul, or allowed it to grow up during infancy and girlhood, under the delusive

hope that the good qualities in her girl's nature would choke out the bad when she grew up to womanhood. But it is the contrary which happens, unless God should interfere and perform a miracle in favour of the neglected or petted child. Selfishness is pretty sure, when continually ministered to and nursed by all around it, to absorb and draw to itself all the vital energies of the soul.

In the tropical forests, in the West Indies particularly, there is a formidable species of parasite creeper whose power becomes fatal to the mightiest trees in the forest. It first shows itself like a little green plant on a sturdy branch of the forest tree, or in a hole in the trunk, whence it sends down thread-like feelers to the ground. There they take root, and reascend along the trunk, increasing in number and size, till not one feature of the parent tree is visible. The whole is now enclosed in a network of serpentine forms so firm, so robust, and so vigorous, that the tiny plant has become a giant, strangling in its embrace the generous trunk which fed and supported it, and hanging high in mid-air, above the topmost branches of its dead benefactor, its brilliant clusters of flowers. Thus does selfishness prosper and flourish!

EXAMPLES OF HEARTLESSNESS.

In a family noted for high culture, refinement, and deep religious faith, the death of a father brought to his home a near relative, a venerable lady of most exemplary life and unselfish devotion to the good of others. Indeed, this noble generosity of soul had prevented her from accepting when young, beautiful,

and accomplished, the many offers of marriage made to her, prompting her to give her whole existence to the comfort and happiness of her nephews and nieces.

She had been looked up to by the dead man with that union of respect and love which we call veneration, and his wife shared these sentiments. Their respected relative had come to the widow in her bereavement, to offer consolation which no other could, and to spend, as was the religious custom of her country, the night before the burial in praying beside the dead. Her arrival was greeted with heartfelt gratitude by all the mourners, save one, a girl of thirteen or fourteen, who was busy, when the visitor arrived, in dressing a doll for some little girl of the neighbourhood. The presence of death in the house, the grief which overwhelmed her mother and sisters, found this girl perfectly callous; the outburst of emotion with which their cherished relative was received did not move her in the least, or only caused her to look up with an air of annoyance from her self-imposed task of sewing. Presently her mother begged her to go and help to prepare a room for their aunt. But at this interruption she flew into a rage, and, in the hearing of the aged and sensitive lady herself, the selfish vixen burst forth: "What on earth brings this old woman here? I am sure she is not wanted" . . . and other such amenities. The wound which these cruel words caused was a deep one, and was never healed in that most generous heart. They filled it with forebodings which she hardly ventured to breathe into the ear of any member of the family.

They were, however, not to remain unfulfilled. She was the youngest child, petted, indulged, spoiled. Her natural selfishness blighted and overtopped every other quality in her character. When its fearful manifestations alarmed both parents, the weak mother attempted in vain to check what was now utterly beyond her control. The heartless girl became the more heartless woman, without affection for husband or children; without a particle of love for her mother or her sisters. She has divided, darkened, and ruined the home which her too fond father had laboured so hard to render happy and bright for all his dear ones.

Were the bitter fruits of heartlessness to be tasted only by the parents through whose criminal neglect and indulgence grew up the evil plant which bore them, it would be a most just retribution. But the heartless woman proves a bane and a destroyer to others, as well as a heart-sore to her parents and nearest relatives.

Where, with this most odious form of selfishness in a woman, she also possesses the terrible gift of beauty, she becomes a curse to every man who falls under the fatal spell of her fair face. Love she cannot, for love, being the gift of self, is impossible to the heartless and selfish. The vanity, begotten of the selfishness which is conscious of the charm of beauty, only yearns for admiration, and gloats on every fresh addition to the number of admirers. The pains endured by the thrice-foolish men who allow themselves to believe in the warmth of a heartless woman's smiles, or to trust to her promises, are of no account to her. We remember once to have seen a

gigantic ivy all in bloom on a part of the ruined walls of Laon. The odour of its flowers is so sweet, and the nectar which they distil so intoxicating, that the flowering mass was covered with a cloud of various insects which struggled and fought for a taste of the delicious food, while the earth beneath was covered with the carcases of countless victims.

THE PUNISHMENT OF HEARTLESSNESS.

The selfish and heartless make no friends, for they cannot inspire anyone who knows them with that enlightened esteem and solid respect which are the first requisites for true love in any being. Christian theology, when well analysed, shows that the greatest torment of the damned is not only the loss of God, and of the blissful society of heaven, but the being placed eternally face to face with one's self—with that self which is the creation of one's own will, the work of one's own hands. And, while yet on earth, the most terrible torture of the utterly selfish woman (say the same of man) is, when admiration and enjoyment have passed away, to find herself in presence of *herself*, of her own false and hollow heart. This is the hell of the heartless, even in this life.

But one or two other examples of this monstrous perversity in the moral formation of certain persons may contain an instructive lesson for more classes than one.

A HEARTLESS WIFE AND A MORE HEARTLESS HUSBAND.

Two young people had married early in their native country, with the understanding that the husband would go forthwith to America, and there

provide for his young wife the home which the misfortune of the times and the circumstances of the country made it impossible to obtain at home.

A few months after his departure, however, his wife was induced by a neighbouring family, who were going to New York, to take passage with them, thinking in her simple heart that, once in the great city, she could find her husband as easily as in her native village.

The poor little woman's disappointment and dismay on her arrival here can be easily conceived. She was penniless, and no inquiries she could make availed to obtain tidings of her husband. After knocking at many doors she was directed, by the clergy of the Nativity, in Second Avenue, to a family up town, ever ready to interest themselves in cases of distress. So one morning, the mistress of the house found in her waiting-room a plainly but neatly dressed young person of striking beauty of countenance, "like one of these lovely Irish girls whom a painter would select for a Madonna." Her story was soon told. "Her husband had promised to send for her when he had got a little place for both, and she was to wait at home for his letter. But," . . . And here the young creature broke down. She told the kind, motherly lady, who questioned her most affectionately, that she was soon to become herself a mother, and her impatience to join her husband was very intelligible. She had found a protectress, however: a safe temporary home was provided for her, she was given sewing and other such work to do, and every care was taken of her welfare till her babe was born. "It was a most beautiful child," said our

informant, "and the happiness of its young mother would have been complete had the efforts made to discover her husband been successful."

A few weeks after the birth of her child she called on her kind benefactress, and told her that she had been advised to go into some good family as a wet nurse, and had put for that purpose an advertisement in the daily papers. "I am sorry you did so without consulting me, Mary," said her kind friend. "It is a thing I would never advise any mother to do; and, besides, we could have found you plenty of good work to do, while attending to your babe."

It was too late; the persons with whom Mary was staying had persuaded her to this course, and the poor, inexperienced young thing hoped to gain money to help her struggling husband in his efforts to secure a home of their own. And then, again, she was assured that her babe would be well cared for in a family a little out of town, which they designated. And so the fatal step was taken.

Mary was accepted as nurse in the family of a minister in Brooklyn, whose name, as well as the denomination to which he belonged, it is needless to mention. After some three weeks had elapsed, this gentleman called one day on Mary's New York benefactress, to inform her that he should have to part with the nurse.

"Part with her?" replied the other; "why so? are you not satisfied with her?" "Oh, she is a very good woman: neat, quiet, respectful, very careful of our child; and our family physician, after examining her, pronounces her a remarkably healthy person. But there are certain things about her we do not

like." "When did you make up your mind to part with her?" "The first week she came to us." "And you did not tell her of it then?" "No, because we have not been able to get a suitable person to take her place." "That seems unkind to her. She could have then returned to her own child in good time; but now she will find that it has been weaned. . . . But, pray, what fault in her could have justified a delay which, to say the least, is cruel?" "Oh! she moans in her sleep, and seems unhappy away from her child, and we do not want to have our babe nursed by anyone who seems unhappy." The lady gazed at him in utter astonishment, mixed with no little contempt for the heartlessness of both himself and his wife. At length she said, indignantly: "Is it possible, sir, that you could expect any woman with a true mother's nature to be able to give up her own child, and give the nourishment she owed it to that of another mother, without feeling her heart breaking, or without moaning in her sleep?" He persisted in saying that he saw nothing to blame in his wife's or his own conduct. The feelings of poor Mary, or the fate of her babe, never cost either of them a thought. "At least," said the lady, as he rose to take his leave, "you must promise me to send Mary back to her babe at once; for to keep her longer in your house, or in ignorance of your intention, would be wrong and criminal." A promise was made, but was not kept. Mary was detained a week or ten days longer, and then dismissed with the heartless indifference which characterised the minister and his spouse. At least a full month had then elapsed since Mary had in-

trusted her beautiful babe to the out-of-town nurse, giving two-thirds of her wages to secure it every possible care and comfort. All this time she had not been permitted to visit it.

Her feeling of joy at the prospect of seeing it overcame every other sentiment in her heart, and without a moment's delay she flew to its side. It was summer-time; she found the woman with whom she had left her treasure dressed in the most slatternly fashion, and a baby, fat and rosy, fast asleep in a cradle. Poor Mary's heart sank within her, and a great faintness came over her as she looked about for her own. She dared not; indeed she could not inquire. . . . On a wooden washboard she saw a dirty shawl in a bundle, and covered with flies, from which a feeble moan proceeded; and going over, she found her babe lying neglected there, so emaciated and so feeble that it had not strength enough to cry for the food it needed.

Of course, the unnatural monster with whom she had left it was confounded at the sudden apparition of the young mother. Had she waited a day or two longer it would have been out of pain, and soon buried away out of sight, and a story found to cover its slow murder. But poor Mary had no time to waste in explanation or accusations. She must save her child.

Away she flew to her benefactress. She was at first unable to utter a single word, and the former thought the child was dead. But when she heard how the case was, "Go back instantly," she said, "and bring your baby here." While Mary had been in the service of the heartless minister and his unwomanly wife, the home to which Mary was

hastening to bring her dying child had been visited by death, and in the gentle mistress's own bedroom a cradle was empty, which she knelt by more than once each day to ask for strength from on high, and to beseech her little angel boy, among the choirs above, to protect his mother's home.

That cradle was now prepared and decked for the stranger child. So when it arrived the entire household was interested in helping the mistress to save the little starveling. A bath of spirits and water was ready, and when, with infinite tenderness, the noble-hearted lady had bathed it, she arrayed the little sufferer in her dead boy's most beautiful dress, and laid it in his cradle, while her daughters knelt around to look upon the tiny, feeble thing, and to pray that it might live. Who can paint the ecstasy of poor Mary as she too knelt by its side, and believed that in the heavenly atmosphere of that room her babe must soon recover.

Presently the great-hearted husband of her benefactress returned from the courts, and on entering his wife's room was greeted with the words: "Oh, do come and see what I have got for you." The other approached the cradle, around which he saw his bright-faced children gazing delightedly, and the strange young woman absorbed in watching her sick infant. The tears filled the eyes of the Christian gentleman as he took in the full meaning of what he saw, and kneeling down reverently by the side of the cradle he kissed the sufferer there as he would the feet of the Divine Babe of Bethlehem. "Darling," he said to his wife, as he rose from his knees, "God will bless you for this!"

Meanwhile no time was lost in seeking a new position for Mary as nurse in a good family. Her infant could take no nourishment from her, and she was assured that where it was every care would be lavished on it. Indeed, it was thenceforth looked upon as the child of the house. Within a few days a gentleman called, in answer to the advertisement in the papers—a Mr. Robinson—who felt both touched and deeply interested by what he heard of Mary, and by the genuine charity exercised towards her by her benefactress. But he would have Mary not separated from her own infant, and took it in the carriage with her to his home, where the little flame of life, which had flashed up fitfully under the loving care of a true mother, soon went out for ever.

Will the reader ask, if from the home where that dying child was taken in and nursed as tenderly and reverently as if it had been the Babe cast out on the roadside at Bethlehem, true women and true men went forth in good season to gladden the souls of the generous mother, and the no less generous father, of whom we have had a glimpse? We can answer: Ay, true men and true women every one of them, because their hearts had been trained from childhood to the pursuit of everything that was unselfish, and devoted to the divine honour and the good of others.

UNSELFISHNESS THE TREASURE OF THE LABOURING POOR.

The directions here given will serve to warn mothers in the home of the labouring man, as well as in that of the most wealthy or well-born, against

the fatal fruits of their own neglect in cultivating the hearts of their children. Oh! let mothers begin early to destroy in the souls of their dear ones every root and fibre of this dreadful bane of selfishness! We have watched with admiration one mother, blessed in this respect with uncommon skill, accustom an infant to give back to her the toys which it fancied most. I was only the beginning of the golden habit of generosity, ever ready to take from self and give to others. Later the child was taught never to enjoy alone anything given to it as a plaything or a dessert. Then, out of the first pennies received for pocket-money, it was made to give at least the greatest portion to the poor; while the most touching stories of other children's distress and suffering were told by the parent to awaken within the tender soul of infancy the sense of pity and the virtue of mercy by these pictures of woe often near at hand. And will not God aid and bless these industries of motherly love?

Let us say it at once: the soil of the labourer's heart is one especially rich in the growth of all the divine virtues that claim kinship with generosity. No one knows it better than he whose hand writes these lines, and to whose memory so long and rich a record of the generous and heroic charity of the poor and the labouring classes is now vividly present.

Whence has come the rich and seemingly exhaustless fund out of which have arisen the Catholic churches, colleges, academies, convents, orphan-asylums, hospitals, and homes for the aged and infirm which have sprung up in the English-speaking world

within the last half century? Mainly from the scanty purse of the labouring man, from the very need of the poor man, and from the incredible generosity of servant girls! Within this great city of New York how many thrilling anecdotes could be told by every priest who has had to build a church, to found a school, or some institution of beneficence!

Let mothers see to it that this rich inheritance of generosity be transmitted to their children, to their daughters particularly, so that the coming generation be as royal-hearted as that which went before it

The blessed root of this undying generosity must be laid in the early love of Him who "also hath loved us, and hath delivered Himself for us, an oblation and sacrifice to God." This has been already insisted on in the preceding chapter, and it only remains that we should once more urge upon the attention of mothers the necessity of making their children do generously whatever they do for God, for their parents, their brothers and sisters, for the poor the widow, and the orphan.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MOTHER'S OFFICE TOWARDS BOYHOOD AND GIRLHOOD. CULTURE OF THE HEART—(CONTINUED).

Magnum donum Dei, donum cordis!
A great gift of God is the gift of heart.

St. Thomas Villanova.

We have been like travellers on their way to the Pacific coast, borne swiftly along tracts most rich in treasures beyond all price, at which they could only glance through the narrow windows of their temporary prison, as steam hurried them onward to their goal. Even though we should devote this entire volume to this beautiful and vast theme of the culture of the heart in childhood and youth, we should be far from exhausting it; and after travelling never so leisurely over the road, we should leave many rich underlying veins of thought and consideration untouched and undiscovered. At least must we direct the attention of every mother who will follow our guidance to a few additional points.

The heart of youth can be most truly likened to these rich deposits of mineral wealth which the hand of the Creator has accumulated for our use beneath the surface of this globe, or to the mighty elements of fire and water out of which the science of man is developing daily such beneficent or destructive forces. There is no limit to the wealth of goodness and

generosity which lies hidden within the heart of any one of your boys or girls; and this fund every mother has to study and bring to light, enriching therewith, first of all, the soul of her child, and then teaching it to bestow its treasures of goodness and generosity on others—on the members of the family circle first, and then on all who stand in need of generous words and deeds. There is more power for good stored up in the heart of a babe, power to lift itself upward to God by heroic goodness and godlike works, and to lift others with it to God's level, than there is of electric force in the ocean. And yet science tells us that a tiny cup full of water contains undeveloped electricity enough to blow up a fortress.

The forces which education—the true education given by a Christian mother—calls forth in the soul of her child may be destined, in the designs and with the aid of God's almighty grace, to save and sanctify as many souls as St. Ignatius Loyola, St. Francis Xavier, St. Vincent de Paul, or St. Teresa. These same forces, neglected or perverted by a wrong heart-culture, may destroy as many souls as a Lucifer or a Mazzini.

Let not mothers who read this, no matter how poor or overburdened with care, say: My child is born in obscurity, and cannot be designed by Providence for such a great work and such mighty results as are pointed out here. Shall we look at one or two examples near our own times of men and women who have lived in our generation?

Here is a poor cooper's family, in a little town in the midst of a vine-growing country. There are two children: a boy who is working hard to gain promo-

tion in the parish school, with the hope of being then sent to college, and becoming in good time a priest; and a timid, sickly little girl, whom it requires perpetual nursing and all the industry of a mother's love to save from the hand of death. The mother is a God-fearing woman, who makes of the practice of solid piety the first care and pleasure of both her children; and the father—in the midst of the deluge of irreligious doctrines and revolutionary tendencies which have crazed the labouring classes in town and country—holds firmly to the faith of his fathers. From the dawn till late into the night the townsfolk see him toiling away at his trade, varying his occupation with the culture of a small patch of vineyard at some distance in the country. In the terrible times during which their boy has grown to manhood, and is approaching the epoch of his ordination, and while their sickly girl is budding into womanhood, both parents have had to fight a hard battle with the dire distress and famine which sweeps over their country like the breath of the divine wrath, and with the tempest of impiety, blood, and fire which sweeps before it throne and altar, king, queen, nobles, bishops, priests, and every man and woman on whom suspicion of loyalty or religiousness can light.

The brother, concealed in his lowly paternal home, has undertaken to cultivate the mind and heart of his sister, and he teaches her all he knows, the languages of Greece and Rome, together with those of modern Europe. It seemed a folly to the parents, a folly to friends and neighbours, this high schooling of the poor cooper's sickly, shrinking daughter by a

brother whose ambition was to cultivate both mind and heart, in man and woman, to the highest degree—*and for God's service!* And so, while parents at home murmured, and outside acquaintance sneered, the twin souls grew under the silent training of that Spirit, who only asks of man to turn to good purpose "the late and early rain" of the present day, and will Himself give the increase and the ripe fruit in due season.

That brother's soul was not of the temper which could permit a priest to tarry idly or lie hidden beneath the shelter of his father's workshop, while Paris streamed with the blood of priests and bishops, and souls in hourly peril of death sought in vain the saving aid a priestly hand could alone bestow. But to Paris he did not go alone. The timid, sickly maiden bore within her bosom a heroic soul, and she would share her brother's dangers, and, so far as she might, his glorious labours.

When the great social earthquake was over, European society was like a city overturned to its very foundations. Unbelief and the most hideous forms of anti-christian error had invaded hearts and households among every class, and the work of conversion had to be begun over again by the patient apostleship of education, more laborious a hundredfold and more difficult than the first great mission of the Twelve, when they went forth from the Upper Chamber to overthrow Roman and Grecian idolatry, with all the barbarous paganism of the tribes lying outside the empire of the Cæsars. And new worlds were also opening beyond the seas, where woman's devotion and heroism were called to vie with the most fervent zeal of priestly workmen.

The brother had been but the instrument in God's hand, training and preparing that little sister, till the memorable day, November the 21st, 1800, when Providence made her the corner-stone of a society of apostolic women whose ranks now extend from Paris to the ends of the earth.

She was in the very springtide of her maidenhood, when he who was then seated on the chair of St. Peter was first laid a babe on the knees of Countess Caterina Mastaï; and on May the 25th, 1865, when that nobly-born child, after passing through the furnace, had borne for nineteen years the thorny crown of the Pontificate, that great-souled woman passed to the city of God on high, where thirteen hundred and sixty-eight of her associates in the world-wide apostleship were waiting for her, and nearly thrice that number were still on earth carrying on throughout both hemispheres the divine purpose to which she had devoted her life.

We have not forgotten that bent and venerable form as we were privileged to behold it just before the angel of death had given the first warning of his approach: the face which seemed to shine with the radiance of the blessed, the words so full of the Spirit of God and which burned into the listener's soul, the atmosphere of holiness which surrounded her, making one feel as if "a virtue went forth," from the very hem of her garments. We could and would fain have knelt for a blessing from that great servant of God, the little sickly maid brought up in the cooper's poor cottage in Burgundy!

And how many others like herself, born in poverty, but trained to that divine generosity, which is the

soul of Catholic spiritual life, were drawn to the saintly foundress by the charm of her humility, her gentleness, her greatness of soul, her consuming love of our Crucified Lord!

Who has done most for his glory and for the true welfare of the race, the lowly-born French girl, who was worthy to be the parent of so wide-spread and so thrifty a spiritual family, or the noble scion of the Mastaï-Ferretti, raised so unwillingly to the papal throne, and governing the Church amid trials far more searching and destructive than the persecution of Decian or Domitian? Their lives have run parallel for three-quarters of a century, and were both animated by that same heroic generosity which knew not how to refuse aught to God or to the neighbour's need.

EDUCATION A CREATION.

The beautiful languages of the nations once the most Catholic in Christendom, Spain, Italy, and Portugal, express the idea and work of education by that equivalent to "create." And a recent traveller in the last-named kingdom, who speaks most highly of the civilisation of the "unlettered" peasantry, deserves to be quoted here. "To say of a Portuguese that he is *mal creado*—ill-brought-up, ill-bred—is still the greatest of reproaches. The exceptions to this universal good-breeding are to be seen among the lower-middle classes, with whom liberal ideas are happily (?) become common, but who appear to think, with liberals elsewhere, that discourtesy is equivalent to an assertion of equality. It has

frequently been noticed that, in Portugal, the best manners are to be found in the very highest and the very lowest classes. The middle classes, as a rule, however, sin rather from an excess than from a want of manners; they are, like some vulgar people at home, far too anxious to show that they know how to behave. They are too ceremonious to be perfectly courteous."*

We are glad to insert this extract here, both to show our readers what the genuine notion of education is, and what effect it produces on men's manners and speech in their intercourse with each other. We shall revert to this perfect courtesy a little further on. At present our object is to show the effect of education on the soul itself. And here it is that we beg parents to consider seriously how divine a work is theirs.

Education does literally complete in the child the work of the Creator. Only think of it. It is a wonderful thing to see how from the acorn planted in the ground a little pair of leaflets will bud forth, and then a tiny stem, which will grow taller and taller each day, each month, each year, putting forth branches, when in the open, to catch the rain, and the dew, and to balance itself against every wind that blows, waxing strong in sunshine and in storm till it becomes the ornament of the field or the hillside, and outliving for centuries the man who planted it and nursed it in its helplessness.

See how the sculptor will take a block of marble from the quarry, and from this rough and shapeless

* John Latouche, "Travels in Portugal," pp. 64, 65.

mass, with mallet and chisel, form a figure so beautiful, so life-like, that it seems to speak to you and almost about to move. And see, also, the great painter Lionardo, at work on a naked wall in a refectory of monks. He wished to represent the Master seated at table for the last time with the Twelve whom He had chosen to be the teachers and parents of a new spiritual world. Figure after figure is sketched and coloured along that table, and on each side of the Master, till the whole is completed; and when the great workman unveils his masterpiece to the gaze of the long-expectant brotherhood, one rapturous cry of admiration bursts forth: "It is a creation!" The Divine One is there, his heart preparing to bestow on them, and on the world through them, his divinest gift, and He foresees how, within a few hours, one of those present will deliver Him up to his enemies, and how all will forsake Him in his need. You almost hear Him say mournfully: "Amen I say to you, that one of you is about to betray me." While the figures which start up around seem to reply by look or gesture: "Is it I, Lord?"

All these wonders of art and industry are, in their importance, not to be compared to the divine work of education, its effects in the soul, and its consequences on the life of the individual and all dependent on his good or evil deeds.

It is for the mother by her intelligence, patience, gentleness, and unwearied love to call forth in the soul of each of her children the mighty virtues lying there as in a rich soil only awaiting the skilful hand of the husbandman.

We are principally occupied with the culture of the heart. Create generosity in it: we have already seen how a beginning can be made in the babe; now let us study its further progress in the boy and girl.

GENEROSITY IN CONQUERING SELF.

We know as well what are the baneful fruits of selfishness and self-indulgence. We have laid down unselfishness as the primary virtue not of motherhood only but of true womanhood. Should any one of the mothers who may be interested in these lessons find, on examining her conscience, that she is still too much in love with self, then let her learn to overcome herself while teaching her child this indispensable virtue of self-denial. There is not a moment to be lost. Bad habits take root with fearful rapidity even in the richest natures. They grow and ripen, and bear their fruit, like southern vines and weeds, almost in a single day and night. Crush them, pluck them out pitilessly from their very first appearance, and do not weary of the labour of rooting them out again and again; for your child's salvation depends on your sleepless watchfulness and perseverance.

The most successful method, however, consists in accustoming your child to continual acts of the virtues opposed to selfishness.

Teach them not to yield easily to the natural sympathies and preferences which arise among brothers and sisters, and which often prove so fruitful a source of domestic discord, strife, and misery. It is, even in the child, selfishness which inclines it to

love all who are of its own disposition, who please it and pet it. Make the child be kind to every one of its brothers and sisters without distinction. But should it so happen that it have a dislike to any one of them in particular, accustom it to show this one some special mark of affection and kindness.

No little strength is imparted to the childish character by thus early accustoming it to be generous in overcoming its likings and dislikes where these are unfounded, or of a nature to breed mischief when allowed to grow. Besides, the exercise of this same generosity of will is of scarcely less importance towards the child's outside playmates and acquaintances. Many a fatal friendship has sprung up at the age of ten or twelve. This very morning's papers record the sudden death from heart disease of a poor hard-working and virtuous mother, whose son, perhaps an only son, had contracted, in spite of repeated warnings and chastisement, an intimacy with a boy of his own age. The latter exercised a sort of fascination over all those of his years in the crowded quarter where they lived, organised a band of juvenile libertines, thieves, and burglars; and gave the police a world of trouble.

A burglary was committed and traced to the two lads; and the tempter and his victim were seized by a detective just as they were about to enter the latter's home. The poor anxious mother had been watching all the livelong night near her window for her absent boy—he is only a boy—judging that he was in some trouble or danger. She had fallen into a slumber towards morning, when the noise at the door

startled her; and, on opening her window, she saw them handcuffing her child. There was a faint scream, which awakened the husband, and then a low moan, while she pressed her hands on her heart. "Oh! the pain I have here!" And she was dead.

Had she been neglectful of her duty towards that child? Alas! but few, very few among mothers of that class, living in such awful neighbourhoods, are careful to do what we are here endeavouring to inculcate—to check the very first beginnings of intimacy and companionship with all who are not thoroughly good.

TEACH THEM GENEROSITY IN THE EXERCISE OF THE HOME CHARITIES.

Home is, or always should be, the school where the child should learn this practical generosity. There are aged persons in the home; and what household is complete or completely blessed without venerable age! There is nothing so beautiful among men as age: its very wrinkles and infirmities are eloquent of the battle of life well fought and the glorious victory won. The fruit tree in spring, when it is covered with the tender green of its leaves and the lovely tints of its blossoms, is a charming object to the sense; but this bloom only lasts a few days, the blossoms drop with the first blast or the first rain, and then all nature's labour through the remaining spring, summer, and autumn is to increase and ripen the fruit. When they hang in all their mellow richness from the branches, at the end of the fine season, do not com-

plain that the flowers are no longer there, that the few leaves left are discoloured or shrivelled, and ready to fall to the ground. Leaves and flowers, dew and rain and sunshine, the rich moisture of the earth and the blessed warmth of the air, all worked together to bring forth fruit on that tree. Is the fruit there? Are the branches bending beneath their load? Then there is not in garden, field, or forest, a more precious or beautiful object than that tree with its golden load of fruit!

Even so with a long life all filled with brave struggles against poverty and loss and treachery and discouragement, with victories over one's own weaknesses and virtues ripened in the soul to the full maturity of Christian holiness—what is more glorious, more lovely, more worthy of affection and reverence, than these long lives, with their merits and pregnant lessons, just as the sun of this world is setting for them and the first brightness of the Eternal Day is on their close?

We could kiss the maimed hands and feet of the soldier who has given his limbs and exposed his life for the defence of our liberty and our honour! Even though the battle in which he received his wounds lasted but a single hour, his glorious scars deserve perpetual remembrance and gratitude. But when the hands of a dear mother, after serving us so long, after having given us so lavishly and lovingly of the fruits of her late and early toil, and having been lifted, morning and night, for our dear need to Him from whom all good descendeth, when these hands that have nursed our helpless infancy, supported and directed us through childhood, are now

infirm with excess of labour, and trembling with the chill of age, shall we ever touch them without kissing them with infinite reverence? For the hands of a mother are the visible image near to us on earth of that Almighty hand, all wisdom and tenderness, which never ceases to toil for us throughout the unwearying years.

Or, when the wearied feet of a father linger, benumbed and leaden, near the hearthstone, shall we not call to mind, with swelling hearts, the long and rugged road over which they have travelled, burdened with the load of our manifold wants, aching and bleeding many times, and yet unable to pause for rest; for the love of us urged them onward through sun and storm, through ice and snow, till nature sank exhausted? O blessed feet, how well might every true-hearted child not only venerate the sores which time and long travel have left behind, but kiss your prints along the rugged paths through which you fared unfalteringly for our dear sakes!

And other aged are often in the home, venerable relatives who cast their lot with the family, or on whose own hearthstone there is nothing left but the cold ashes of a former warm and generous hospitality; or the stranger, given a place by the hearth in Christ's name, and to be reverenced as his own person!

O home-charities of the Christian family, what deep and heavenly love you lay open to the soul, and what visions of the dwelling of the Common Father above the skies, where love eternal decks out its most royal mansions for those who are poorest and lowliest here below!

With all the voices of our soul we beseech you, O mothers, to inculcate reverence for the aged, whom God has given you to love and venerate in his own stead. Beautiful, most beautiful, is this tender and worshipful regard which our holy faith bids us pay to gray hairs. It was a living part of the religion of our fathers, it was the honour of every Catholic fireside: oh! let us cherish it here as the sure pledge of God's blessing on our homes, and the fulfilment of the promise of "long life in the land" to all who honour father, and mother, and old age to the end! Teach your boys and girls also to

REVERENCE AND WORSHIP THE SICK AND INFIRM IN YOUR HOME.

To the lessons contained in the seventh chapter of this book, it may suffice to add here, that of all the blessings God may send to the home of such as love Him truly, none is more precious than the presence of the sick.

Children and young people (at least where these have not been already perverted by self-indulgence) are naturally inclined towards the needy and suffering. The pale and emaciated features of the sick plead eloquently with young and generous hearts, and their moans find a ready echo in souls from which sin has not banished the spirit of charity. It is for mothers to foster and train aright in the bosoms of their boys and girls this touching sympathy towards every kind of infirmity and disease. There is One in the soul of your child who will not fail to help you powerfully. Only recall, when you are teaching your dear ones, how the Master loved the

sick, and how He would have it that if they only touched the hem of his garment with a lively faith they should instantly be healed.

Was it not his own mission of healing mercy to our souls that He described so divinely in the parable of the Good Samaritan? Is not the office of that love which bore us in its heart from all eternity, and which ever stoops to the need and misery of each, as if each were alone in existence, painted by the divine hand in that alien in blood and religion who forgot the whole world to care for the wounded man found by the roadside, while priest and Levite, the fellow-countrymen and fellow-worshippers of the poor forlorn one, went to the other side of the road, lest it should be thought they saw his blood or heard his groans?

Make every child of yours know and feel that he or she is the poor lost one, cast, all wounded and dying, by the roadside, and so near the eternal death, and that the friend in need was He who came from the throne of heaven to heal, to restore, to lift up to the height whence He had Himself descended. Make them understand that, on leaving the earth again, He wishes and bids everyone of us to do for the sick in body, in heart, or in soul, what He did for us.

LET CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE GENEROUSLY OVERLOOK INFIRMITIES OF TEMPER IN THE AGED AND SICK.

This will be the crown of your home-charities; for, if there are aged and sick persons of so sweet a disposition, and such conversational charm, that the pleasure felt in one's intercourse with them more

than repays any service rendered, any effort at generosity made in attending to their wants or their gratification, there are others whose manners disgust or whose temper sorely tries all who approach them.

This, however, is an extreme case. But be that as it may, it is the mother's duty, where there are such persons in the family, to prepare the children to expect that old persons should have certain peculiarities which are to be borne with. The reverence with which she will have taught them to regard age in all persons, will prevent her dear pupils from turning into ridicule whatever might strike them as ludicrous. Nay, the true politeness which comes from the culture of the heart, and is the offspring of piety, will teach them to submit gracefully and lovingly to the whims and oddities of old people, as well as to the irritability of the sick.

This generous self-restraint and devotion to the need and comfort of others is an admirable discipline for the young, as well as a rich source of merit before the Divine Majesty, whom the true children of God profess to serve, and believe they serve, in ministering to the infirm and the aged.

GENEROSITY IN FORGETTING ONE'S PAIN, TO PLEASE OTHERS.

This last and most important form of the home-charities can be practised by children every day of their lives. A mother well accustomed, in her unvarying attention to the happiness of all around her, to forget the pain that is torturing head and limbs, the carking care which is gnawing at her heart, and

the grief which is seldom absent from the life of the purest and the best, will easily succeed in making her daughters remember that they too must forget their little aches and griefs to make all pleasant for their brothers and sisters, or to show perfect hospitality to visitors. Nor will they have any difficulty in making their sons, every day and hour of their lives, give up out-door pleasures or pursuits in order to contribute their share to home enjoyments, or to its generous hospitalities.

One instance of such self-denial, in a child of twelve summers, may conclude, not inaptly, this fundamental doctrine on generosity. She, as well as her older sisters, had been taught by the example of both her parents to devote herself, in spite of headaches, or other such slight ailments, to make the evenings in the family circle delightful, or to give up her whole time to the entertainment of guests. In the absence of the mother, this became the all-important duty of her daughters; and they, to gratify their worshipped mother, vied with each other in leaving no one of the home-charities unattended to while she was away.

It so happened that during one of these enforced absences the fatal disease which carried off our little maiden so suddenly, seized her at the very time when two girls of her own age, and dear friends of the family, were visiting her. The child was in an agony of pain all day, trying the while to wear her sweet smile, to play and sing with her friends; and, lest she should seem inhospitable, she carefully concealed her torture from her sisters, going for a few moments to the kitchen, where no one could observe

her, and giving way to her tears. She made the cook promise that no one should know she was suffering.

And thus the day passed, and the long evening came. But then the pain in her limbs became so dreadful, that every now and then she would cast herself on the sofa to find a moment's relief. She took her share in all the amusements of the drawing-room; it was only remarked that her eyes shone with a preternatural brightness, and that her colour went and came very rapidly. She had, however, no sooner bidden her two little friends good-night, than she became insensible.

They laid the unconscious child on the sofa, applied, in vain, restoratives, and then bore her to her room. But she was to rise no more from her bed. During an entire week she raved in the grasp of the malignant and mysterious disease which had seized upon her, unable to recognise even her father, but calling piteously and continually for her absent mother. She, with her eldest daughter, was hundreds of miles away by the sick-bed of her own parent. The latter, when the telegraph summoned her visitors away, would not even hear of her grand-daughter's remaining with her, and chose to suffer alone in her widowed home, bidding her children imperatively not to delay one moment.

They did not arrive a moment too soon. It was midnight when they entered the sick-chamber; the terrible spasms of the preceding days had now given place to a deep lethargy, the evident forerunner of death. The poor mother, who expected every minute to be the last, sat tearful but resigned to the coming of the dread angel, praying with her whole

soul that her child might recover consciousness, were it only to know that her mother was by her side. Suddenly, at the first break of dawn, the little sufferer opened her eyes, a preternatural light overspread her features, and, stretching forth her arms, "Oh, mamma!" she said, "I am so glad you have come home again!" Then, raising herself, she clasped her weeping parent round the neck, and drew her down on the pillow. "Dear mamma," she continued, "I have been very ill since you went away." Her parent tried to soothe her; but, as the patient perceived her youngest sister standing near, "Oh! L——," she said, "you can now have my blue ribbon" (a favourite ornament). And, with one look of inexpressible tenderness at her mother, and drawing what seemed a deep sigh of relief, she closed her eyes, and gave her soul to the embrace of the divine messenger.

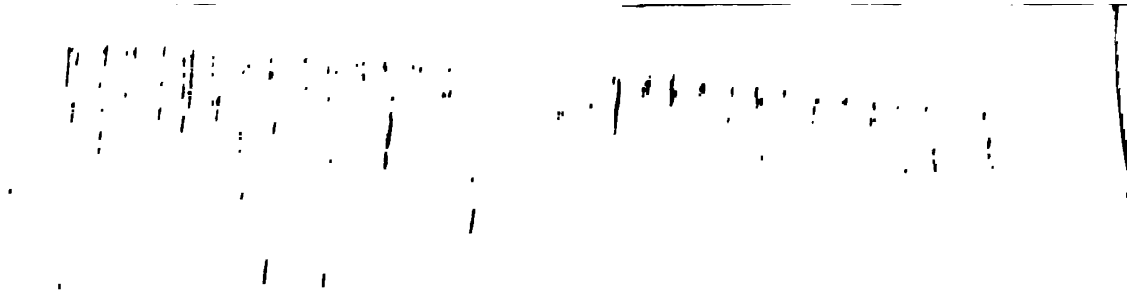
She had been preparing, with angelic fervour, for her first communion, and would have made it ere the end of the month. On the Sunday before her illness she had, as usual, gone to early Mass in her parish church. She begged her brother and youngest sister, when the service was ended, to go home without her, while she remained to pray a little longer. To their remonstrances she replied that she wanted to ask for the grace of a happy death. "You know, dear," she pleaded, "that one may die suddenly." The malignant pustule which soon manifested itself gave no sign of its presence when the words were uttered.

Scarcely four hours had elapsed after that most innocent soul had been borne away, when the body was so blackened that it had to be enclosed in a

casket. Yet, from the very moment of her passing away, so sweet and strange an odour filled the room, that the whole household, as well as strangers, marvelled at it, so unlike was the fragrance to any perfume of earth; and when, later, the family changed their residence, two of the deceased child's sisters visited her room to ascertain whether the odour still clung to it. It was there still, like an atmosphere of purity and virginal holiness!

GENEROSITY IN PRACTISING THE OUT-DOOR CHARITIES.

As every mother, whether her home be that of the labouring man, or that of the rich man, or the noble, has a deep interest in the poor round about, and a divine obligation to fulfil towards them in proportion to her means, so is it her duty to train her children to aid her in ministering to them. We remember a baker's wife, with eight children, girls nearly all of them, and whose husband was not troubled with much money in bank, who never failed during the most inclement winter's weather to go out with one of her children to bring bread to a number of poor families in pressing need of relief. Winter and summer, long before the break of day, she and her companion, with their full basket, would sally forth, making their visits rapidly, and then stopping at the nearest church to hear Mass, before they broke their fast. To be mother's companion in this early excursion was a privilege eagerly contended for by all her children, and often granted as a reward for success at school or steady amendment at home. And the baker himself, when his oldest boy could superintend the business during the early



tune, far more than he possessed had been distributed to the poor or bestowed in good works, during his lifetime, by himself, and his sons and daughters under his direction. Indeed he was known and revered far and wide as the father of the poor.

After his funeral, and the reading of the will, his sons and grandsons would not separate till they had agreed to take on themselves, each some one of the favourite good works and charities of their parent. The eldest son allowed all his juniors to make their choice; "and," said our informant, "they seemed to have all of them quite enough in what was allowed to them; while to the eldest fell the 'discipline' or scourge, and the hair shirt used by the saintly dead to keep his own body in subjection. But to every one of that noble race had descended unimpaired the faith and generosity of their heroic ancestors."

Such are the results of Catholic piety where the Spirit of God is allowed to reign both in homes and in hearts; such the generously-tempered souls, in the palace as well as in the cottage, which true Christian mothers form when they do their work well. But what shall we think of such women as are painted in the following passages:

"When we observe women for whom silk is too rough, whom a rose-leaf wounds, who swoon at the least sound, who cannot pronounce their words whole, who, forgetting their own affairs, attend to those of others, whose lives pass in visiting their pretended friends, who are found at all parties, who are pleased in worldly societies, in splendid entertainments, and cannot live retired in their houses, who must know all the stories of the town, whose curiosity impels

them to go everywhere, who can invent false reports, and can rekindle old hatreds—when we consider what these persons ought to be, and what they are, . . . it is difficult not to feel an indignation which is itself admonitory and instructive; for then we shall call to mind that the Catholic religion, which denounced such manners as infamous, furnishes the best security against their recurrence." *

MAKE NOT THE BREAD OF HOSPITALITY BITTER.

And so, with one other word of exhortation, we close this chapter. Among the many outside of one's home to whom charity in its most blessed form will prove a most welcome visitor, there will be found persons too proud to make their wants known, and too sensitive about accepting any aid, even when at their utmost need. And such persons are as numerous among the poorer classes as among the rich and the well-born.

Find out these shrinking ones. Approach them with more respect than you would show to king or queen, or pope or president. Your heart will teach you how to make the much-needed relief acceptable. For the heart has infinite delicacy. And when you have discovered these hidden sufferers from want, not only must you be careful not to pry into their lives or to show a curiosity which would be resented because it wounds cruelly, but you must conceal names and facts from everybody as sacredly as you would guard the secrets of your own soul.

There are families unwearied in their efforts to

* Luis de Leon, quoted in *Compitum*, B. I., c. iv., p. 107.

find out such cases of distress and meritorious charity as we here point out, and who, when the sufferers belong to their own class, are most ingenious in making their own homes acceptable and delightful to these homeless ones. Oh! it is the luxury of doing good rewarded by an interior sweetness beyond the power of expression.

But let us remember, when such sufferers are admitted to our hospitality, that no act or effort should be neglected to make the bread we break to them sweet, and the wine of our generosity not bitter, by cold looks or anything that might savour of weariness or neglect.

CHAPTER XIII.

SPECIAL TRAINING FOR GIRLS AND FOR BOYS.

Thus far the instruction given applied almost equally to children of both sexes. What is said in this chapter addresses itself first to girls and then to boys, purposing to aid the mother in perfecting the education of her daughters and sons, according to the requirements of their future avocations.

I.

WHAT IS SPECIAL IN THE HOME EDUCATION OF GIRLS.

There are not a few persons, of great experience in directing souls, who have been so dispirited at seeing the result of the public education given to boys, that they would have parents and all persons interested in teaching bestow their chief care on the training of girls. Whatever may be the little or the much of truth in the theories, arguments, and facts set forth by these persons and their opponents, it is none the less indisputable that the ill training given to girls, whether at home or in our public schools, has made them the abettors and counsellors of the dishonesty, the corruption, the love of extravagance and dissipation which are producing among men of every class in the community the frightful crop of

crime which is the most alarming symptom of the latter half of this nineteenth century. The forgeries, the wide thirst for ruinous speculation, the gambling on the stock-exchange, the betrayal of sacred trust in offices high and low, the open and shameless organisations of public men in almost every department of general or local government aiming at bribing in order to rob the public, and robbing in order to supply the inconceivable extravagance of their wives and daughters: all this is due either to the early lack of strong moral home-culture, to the neglect of woman's holy influence over boyhood, or to the baneful influence of women ill-trained or taught to look upon pleasure and enjoyment as the prime end of life.

Assuredly if mothers are only such as we have been describing them, if their children and their young people are brought up in the convictions, the principles, and the conscientious practice of the virtues we have been detailing, our young girls will be anything but vain, extravagant, heartlessly fond of admiration and enjoyment, while their brothers must be everything rather than the wretched crowd of untrustworthy spendthrifts, forgers, thieves, gamblers, and drunkards whose doings are daily chronicled in the press.

But apart from these degrading and discouraging manifestations of the result of our wide-spread educational systems, there remains to the Church of God, and to the priest who does her work faithfully, the mighty influence of Christian motherhood training an army of true women to withstand and cry down untrustfulness, dishonesty, and corruption, and an

auxiliary army of true men, to be in their lives the embodiment of truth, honour, and incorruptible integrity.

We do not know whether this little book may ever reach the firesides of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, or Methodists, but we fervently hope, with his blessing who knows how to use the lowliest instrumentalities for the highest purposes, that it may be of some utility in the homes of our Catholic millions, and thereby leaven their hearts and minds with that loftiness of aim and purity in performance without which neither public liberty nor national greatness is possible.

So then, O mothers, we are now in the very heart of our subject; and no words we can use are at all able to express the intense desire we have to fix your whole attention on what we are about to say.

THE GIRLHOOD AND BOYHOOD OF TO-DAY THE TWIN-ROOTS OF THE SOCIETY OF THE FUTURE.

The spirit and practice of simplicity in dress, in food, and in furniture, the practical and continual self-denial, which we have laid down as the very soul of womanly virtue (as they are in very deed the soul of Christian life), must be made the groundwork of the education you give your girls. It will be for them, as it must have been for yourselves, health of body as well as health of soul; it will be for the men and women of whom God destines them to be the mothers, the principle of strength of limb and energy of will, of clearness of intellect and purity of life; and these are the men and women for which America and the whole of Christendom are yearning

and praying, and without whom, within a century, our civilisation will be worse than heathenism.

SIMPLICITY AND SELF-DENIAL.

There never yet existed a perfect man, one possessed of that moral excellence in which there is no flaw, who was not distinguished by simplicity of character and a life of self-denial. Much more is this true of woman. And why? Because the true woman, the perfect woman, values before and above everything that virtue, that strength of mind which seeks to make the soul like unto God, by the possession of perfect knowledge and perfect holiness, and by considering external advantages—beauty, wealth, dress, ornament, and the homage of others—as only an accessory to greatness of the soul, and as utterly valueless when that greatness is not there. These things do not make the woman or the man, no more than the magnificent robes of a feeble, decrepit old king, when a pageant or state-reception is over, can help to conceal the palsied limbs, the shrunken frame, the weakened mind, or to pacify the conscience mindful of a long life of debauchery and tyranny.

You have often seen women—poor women, too—so beautiful that no splendour of dress could have added to the charm of their beauty: simplicity alone befits those things which God has made most beautiful and most perfect. Ornament is there superfluous, or the Creator would have added it; and ornament is only called in to aid in concealing the poverty of nature or of art.

You have also seen women—nay, you know such in every neighbourhood—to whom, naturally un-

comely, or even ugly, goodness, innocence, holiness lend a charm so heavenly that they are more than beautiful. The light of the beautiful soul seems, in such persons, to pierce the rude bodily covering, and overspread the features, transforming them, making them shine with a splendour which is not of earth.

Oh! aim, then, at possessing, first of all, this unearthly glory, which, though "all within," sheds a lustre on the bodily frame that ravishes the beholder. We remember in one of the dear old Catholic homes of Maryland to have seen an aged slave-woman, who had a merited reputation of exalted piety, so transformed while expressing her anxiety about the spiritual welfare of her husband and son living in Louisiana, that her face shone like that of an angel. Indeed it was impossible to see this gentle creature without being impressed with a feeling akin to veneration, so visibly did the light of holiness irradiate the dark and wrinkled countenance! So was it with the venerable Mother Barat, the foundress of the Ladies of the Sacred Heart; and so with many and many a soul to whom we have given the Bread of Life at the Communion table: rays from behind the veil seemed to illumine their countenances with a glory that sent a thrill to the soul of the beholder.

SIMPLICITY IN DRESS.

Beauty, the highest beauty, does not consist so much in outline and form as in expression; and what ineffable beauty does not the expression of purity and holiness give to the homeliest countenance and the frailest figure! Certain old earthenware vases were covered with designs so exquisite,

and in colours so cunningly disguised to an ordinary observer, that, in his estimation, they possessed neither beauty nor value. But when, at night, a light was placed within them, the whole artifice of the maker was plain, and they were pronounced most beautiful and of inestimable price by the beholder.

Be ambitious to place that light—the light of that supernatural love you know of—within your daughter's soul; and fear not but when lighted up with it face and figure will charm all who look upon them. This first labour of yours will only be the beginning of the formation of

> "A perfect woman, nobly planned
> To warn, to comfort, and command—
> And yet a spirit still and bright,
> With something of an angel light!"

If you continue to add to this sweet simplicity and purity of soul that other sister and guardian virtue, self-denial, as you have been taught in the preceding chapters, rest assured that, at fifteen and sixteen, your child will add to that angelic expression of countenance

> "The reason firm, the temperate will,
> Endurance, foresight, strength, and skill,"

everything, in one word, which can make her "a phantom of delight" to the beholder.

What man, no matter how high-born, if his heart has not been corrupted by vicious indulgence, would not prefer such "a vision of purity," though wearing the simplest attire, to a gaudy worldling dressed out in robes and jewels worth a fortune, and from

whose eyes flashes only the fire of earthly passions?

It is not the child rich in the priceless treasure of the virtues you thus inculcate who is likely to be unsought for or unloved, or who, when she has been found by the man of God's own choice, will fail to make his home a paradise, and his whole life one long blissful bridal day.

If you are a wealthy mother, you will understand that by insisting on this early love and practice of simplicity, we do not condemn the richness of attire suitable to one's condition, or the occasional wearing of suitable ornaments.

The habit of simplicity in girlhood and maidenhood will be certain to lead to appropriateness and good taste in everything and throughout life. It is not the well-born or the well-educated, the simple-minded and pure-hearted maidens of our true Catholic homes, who are to be seen before marriage bedizened, like the queens of a country theatre, with flashy gold ornaments, added to the horror of the loudest colours; it is not the married women who have come from such homes, after having been trained by true Christian mothers, who will be seen going through the markets with trains fit only for a drawing-room, and their fingers all aflame with diamonds and emeralds, or astonishing the motley crowd, packed into a street-car, with their diamond ear-rings, their diamond brooches, and their diamond necklaces, all which flaming ornaments in such places advertise the wearers as "shoddy," as plainly as if they bore the word placarded on breast and shoulders.

SUITABILITY IN DRESS IS NOT EXTRAVAGANCE.

This beautiful simplicity in dress and ornament still remains as a relic of ancient Catholic customs even in the countries that have cast off their allegiance to the Roman See. All through maidenhood girls of the highest rank dress with extreme simplicity, which its very suitableness and good taste compel one to consider as elegant; unmarried young ladies, though never so nobly born, do not wear jewels, even on solemn occasions.

This same habit of simplicity and sense of appropriateness have another remarkable effect in old Catholic lands. In Spain and Portugal, women of every rank, young and old, married and unmarried, never attend church save dressed in black and deeply veiled. The highest and wealthiest have a little mat brought with them to the church, on which they sit or kneel during the service. There are no pews, and no carpets, to preserve the worshippers from contact with the cold marble or tiles of the floor.

The same custom prevailed all over Christendom before the Reformation: one not unlike it rules in many parts of Italy and France, in spite of the sad changes brought about by revolutionary impiety. At any rate, the practice points to the beautiful discipline of the Church in times when she was powerful enough to enforce her own regulations; and the austere simplicity and sentiment of equality which underlie the custom, embody her doctrine and feeling.

They are in marked contrast with the luxuriousness with which so many of our fashionable churches are fitted up, and with the extravagance of the

women who frequent them at late service, the wealthy dressing as if the house of God were the temple of Vanity, and the poor either excluded by their very poverty or shamed into staying away lest their poor attire should provoke the sneers of the rich. With Protestant denominations, among whom this scandal is so general, where the church edifice belongs to the society of worshippers, and where a wealthy few own and furnish it and hire the preacher, we have nothing to do. We only pray that the day may be far distant, indeed, when the Divine Sacrifice of the New Law, at which all Catholics are bound to be present, shall fail to have around its altars the crowd of the poor and the lowly, so dear to the heart of the Great Victim!

But the very mention of this Victim and this blessed daily sacrifice, with all the sublime and comforting realities which cluster around it, should be enough to recall to the mind of every believing man and woman how monstrous it seems to make of the solemn celebration of the death of Him who died hanging naked, humiliated, and soul-stricken on the bitter tree, an occasion of displaying vanity in dress and levity in deportment.

Oh! how true to the divine reality of the sacrifice is the beautiful Spanish custom, which bade women come to Mass attired as if they were to mourn with the Mother of Sorrows, and men to stand upright in their strength, as if they emulated the beloved disciple who stood with Mary beneath the cross during the three long hours of his terrible agony! And shall we Catholics, in this nineteenth century, allow the glorious piety of our fathers to die out in our souls,

and our churches to be other than the temples of the Lamb, where we should meet half in joy and half in sorrow beneath the shadow of the cross and its Victim, to taste in our heart of hearts the bitter-sweet of the great commemoration?

WHAT YOUR DAUGHTERS ARE TO READ.

Akin to the fatal passion for dress is the still more fatal and no less general passion for light reading. We have already warned you against the danger of reading every book and newspaper they may chance upon. What then shall they read? It would scarcely be possible, even if it were wise, to give a list of books and publications adapted to family reading, and specially suited to the minds of children and young people. Vitally important as early religious instruction is, and great as is the help derived from reading books treating on religion and the men and matters connected with its history before and after Christ, it is hard, and it might seem invidious, to point out those which we deem the very best for the purpose now in view.

English-speaking Catholics labour under no slight disadvantage in that the standard works of English literature are for the most part either not Catholic or bitterly anti-Catholic. Our language had been formed, just as the genius of the nation had been trained, by the Catholic education of the eight centuries preceding Elizabeth. Just as the diction of Chaucer and Robert Grossetête had ripened into the style of Spenser, Shakespeare, and Sir Thomas More, the arch-enemy broke up the unity of Christendom, and separated England from the Holy See. The

classic tongue which Catholic England had been perfecting and polishing then became the mighty weapon of triumphant heresy and the vehicle of a spirit hostile to the Church of St. Bede and Alfred the Great. It is only within the lifetime of the generation not yet passed away that the Catholic worship was free under the British crown, or that the English tongue was taught to utter Catholic truth or convey to men's minds the history, the doctrines, and the ascetic theology of the Great Mother.

Still we have in the works issued within three-quarters of a century, on both sides of the Atlantic, a great wealth of Catholic literature. We lack, indeed, many, very many—not to say most—of the beautifully illustrated and otherwise attractive books destined especially for childhood and youth, and in which Protestant literature is so rich. Still we have enough, and more than enough, to place in the homes of the wealthy, as well as in the least favoured homes. For, during childhood and early youth, educated and zealous mothers, truly Christian teachers, and well-conducted Sunday-schools, will know how to provide ample food, wholesome and nourishing, for the young and studious mind.

It is most important that girls should be even better grounded than boys of their age in the clear and full knowledge of Christian doctrine, the Bible history,* the history of the Church, the lives of the most glorious saints in every age, and in that beautiful portion of Christian history which relates the rise and progress of Church architecture, with the

* Reeves', ed. by Dr. Walsh.

dependent arts of painting and sculpture. Such eloquent works as those of Montalembert—the "Life of St. Elizabeth of Hungary," and "The Monks of the West"—will open up for the generous mind of youth prospects so enchanting and a world of heroism so beautiful and elevating, that no boy or girl who has begun them can help reading to the end and returning to the lecture again and again, like the thirsty traveller to the delicious spring; and those who like such works will be impatient to read more—the works of Rio on Christian art and poetry those of Ozanam, of Dom Guéranger, and many of Dr. Newman's most beautiful volumes.

GIRLS TO BE TAUGHT IN GOOD TIME THE WEAKNESS OF HERESY AND UNBELIEF.

Your object in training, instructing, educating your girls is to rear women thoroughly enlightened in all that can make them love the faith of their baptism and enable them to explain and defend it; to rear mothers able to be the first and most successful teachers of their children in all that pertains to faith and the true life—the life of the soul. When girls have reached their thirteenth year, they must be given the history of the heresies and schisms which still live and set themselves up against the authority of Christ's infallible Church.

They must be enlightened with regard to the present universal war waged against the independence of the Papacy, or rather against its temporal sovereignty, without which no Pope can exercise freely and independently the spiritual functions of universal pastor. "What, indeed, is it," says Bellarmine,

"which is brought into question when there is question of the Pontifical supremacy? It is, in one word, the very existence of Christianity. For then the question really is, whether the Church should continue to exist, or fall to pieces and disappear."* All the Protestant sects unite with infidelity and revolutionism in urging on public opinion and the States of what was once Christendom against the Holy See. But they do not see how their own existence, and that of the Christian religion itself, are involved in the extinction of this independence. "The churches at enmity with the universal Church," says Count de Maistre, "subsist notwithstanding only by means of the latter, although they may little imagine it; like those parasite plants, those sterile excrescences which live only on the substance of the tree that supports them, and is impoverished by them."†

It would not be prudent to allow one's children to go forth into the busy world and have their ears assailed by the many objections which the sects bring against the Church, without having prepared them beforehand with a proper answer to all and each. This, of course, applies mainly to educated women, who have had the leisure and opportunity of well studying these doctrinal differences. But we have met beneath the roof of the labouring man and the artisan with mothers thoroughly read up in these matters, and well skilled, too, in the use of their theological weapons.

Young girls are also to be warned in time against

* *Præfatio in librum de Summo Pontifice.*
† *Considérations sur la France*, p. 33.

the arguments used by infidelity and materialism under the name of "Modern Science." They are to be told that, apart from the very imperfect deductions of some hostile geologists, there is not an argument used by Darwin, or Tyndall, or Huxley, that has not been rehashed from the works of the ancient Greek philosophy; not a form of error which has not again and again been denounced, refuted, and anathematised by the Church.

At the close of the last century, and during the Reign of Terror in France, Count de Maistre wrote: "The present generation is witnessing one of the greatest spectacles ever offered to the eyes of men, the mortal combat between Philosophism and Christianity. The lists are opened, the two adversaries are engaged, and the whole world is looking on."* Girls, as well as young men, are thus more firmly grounded in their faith and prepared to defend it against all comers. They see in the present designs of Darwinians, radicals, and revolutionists only the continuance of the old warfare against God and his truth, and in their pretended "new" theories and discoveries the old, old tales of the father of lies re-echoed from age to age throughout all time.

WHAT GIRLS ARE NOT TO READ.

Together with this solid and religious instruction, impart to every one of your girls a deep horror of the licentious and romantic literature of the day. Their inborn good sense will enable them to feel that it is just as dangerous and as fatal to allow the mind

* *Ibidem*, p. 79, published in 1796.

to feed upon the thousand-and-one "Cheap Novels," "Illustrated Weeklies," and "Fireside," or "Seaside Libraries," as it would be on entering forest or fields in summer or autumn, to eat of the bright-coloured berries of unknown kinds, or of the beautiful and tempting forms of mushroom that cover the earth all around.

Let their rule be to read only what they know to be good, and never to touch what they know to be bad, or what they suspect is so. One of the first principles of morality is, that all rational beings accountable to God for their actions, should be able to assign a lawful motive for every act of theirs. It is no justification for me, either in presence of my own reason, or before the divine judgment, that I have the power of doing such or such a thing, *if I choose;* I must further justify my doing it by the reason that it is good, useful, and lawful to me to do what I am impelled to. If I have any fears as to the act being wrong or hurtful, I am bound to suspend my action till I am better informed.

This applies to the works which in every shape, and at the lowest prices, are continually poured on the book market to entice the appetite of our boys and girls. Mothers cannot be too careful in protecting their dear ones against this impure deluge, and in cautioning them, when they are grown up, against the dreadful effect of these literary poisons.

INSPIRE THEM WITH A HORROR OF INDECENT PRINTS.

Just as a conscientious, God-fearing girl would not read one page or one line of a book she knew to be bad, even so must she be taught to turn her eyes

away, unhesitatingly and instinctively, from an indecent engraving, or painting, or sculpture, no matter where she happens upon it. Make her understand that this is a matter of high principle, a matter between her soul and the All-seeing; so that even when alone she stumbles on such objects, she would turn her eyes and her whole mind away from the object, as she would withdraw her hand or arm from the contact of red-hot iron.

GIRLS TO BE TAUGHT THE VALUE OF TIME.

Not less important to the future welfare of your children, than anything you can teach them, is the priceless value you should accustom them to set upon time. Mothers—wealthy mothers in particular—cannot weigh too seriously and conscientiously how strictly the just Judge will call them to account for the use of the hours, and days, and years which are wasted in idleness, even though not misspent in vice and dissipation. There are some persons who live as though they never had been taught when young that the Great Giver of life, and time, and hourly opportunities, would surely exact of them one day a minute account of the use made of every sun that rose upon them, and of every hour that marks his course.

Mothers, such as we suppose our readers to be, cannot plead ignorance of their early knowledge of the sacred obligation of employing every moment of time to good purpose, and, surely, they will not allow son or daughter of theirs to be ignorant in so vital a matter.

It is in childhood, and in youth especially, that

every day is of priceless value, when, in simplest truth, every precious hour well employed is a seed sown in the furrow, and covered over with the fostering earth, and blessed of God from on high to bring forth certain increase in due season. But every day and hour idled away or misspent in doing anything and everything but what one ought to do, is an opportunity thrown away for self-improvement, for progress in all true goodness, or, what is infinitely worse, given to the service of the arch-enemy of souls, and of their Almighty Creator.

Our lost days are dead leaves strewing the street along which we daily travel, lying as they fell, and never to bloom or live again. They are "ears of wheat" given us to sow for food of life eternal, and which we have not cast into the furrow, but thrown on the highway, to be "trodden into clay." They are "golden coins" confided to our husbandry, with which the Giver intended we should purchase eternity, and we have squandered them against his will! But they are "still to pay." . . . And presently, when youth has quickly passed, and old age is before us, like the dry-bed of a river out of which almost the last drop has been drained, we would fain go back to drink of these sweet waters of our life; but they are like "spilt water" thrown on the burning soil, and cheating the ever-thirsting throats of "men in hell."

We must not deceive ourselves: every moment of time is ourself living during that brief space, every hour and day, is our own soul filling that hour and that day with its deeds of good or ill.

You have heard of the "transit" or passage of a

star across the sun's disk: astronomers watch it with their telescopes, and count by minutes and seconds the apparition of a little black speck on the bright round luminary, while it moves rapidly across it to the opposite side, to be apparently lost in the unmeasured heavens beyond. The span of our life, as compared with eternity, is like that bright broad face of the sun projected on the immensity of space behind it; and the stages of our passage through life are as brief and as rapid as the transit of yonder planet across the sun. At every minute and second it is "myself" who am moving before the eye of the all-seeing and all-remembering God. I enter life like one emerging from the boundless void behind me, and appear moving, moving across the narrow circle of my life during the few fleeting years given me to exist, and then I pass out of the sight of mortal man into that other limitless eternity beyond.

But brief as is my passage across the narrow sphere allotted to me, I can merit, while it lasts, to shine for ever "from eternity to eternity," or to disappear for ever from that heaven where my glory might have been commensurate in duration with that of the sun's Creator. Yes, to God's eye, every moment of my existence here below is "myself passing over the circle of this life of trial," it is myself living for God, or forgetting Him, or working against Him, while the resistless motion of the heavens hurry me from my birth to my death; from time to eternity; from the use or abuse of the golden moments, and days, and hours, to the terrible, unavoidable, and most righteous judgment of the Eternal God.

When "my time" is past, and that judgment is at hand, I shall look back upon the misspent years, each year shall be *myself*, looking my conscience full in the face,

> "'I am thyself—what hast thou done with me?
> And I—and I!'"

And what I have made myself, by actual deadly guilt unrepented of, God will adjudge me to remain unchanged and unchangeable throughout all eternity!

We have known men, born, alas! amid wealth, and nursed in the lap of unlimited indulgence, who, having grown up in vice, without any other god but their animal appetite, and without any apparent sense of responsibility for youth and manhood wasted in eating, drinking, and dreaming, would say to their own young children as these reproved them for their sloth: "What sin am I committing? I am doing no one harm!" Had they passed out of life, as these words were uttered, into the hands of Him who giveth *to everyone according to his way, and according to the fruit of his devices*,* they would have known what is the terrible and irreparable guilt of a wasted life.

MINUTES ARE THE GOLDEN SANDS OF TIME.

Elsewhere, in your office of mistress of the home, we have pointed out the necessity of order towards a proper and fruitful economy of time; this love of order you must make a second nature in every one of your dear ones; and, besides, you must begin early to impress them with the priceless importance of having neither idle hours nor idle moments. Of

* Jerem. xvii. 10.

course, we count not these hours as idle or ill-spent which follow the day's toil, and are devoted *by all* in the home of the labouring man, as well as in the mansion of the wealthy, or the halls of the prince, to pure and blessed family recreation and enjoyment. If mothers and fathers, children, visitors, and guests, would only make it a rule to join heartily in these "fireside entertainments," they would find these sweet evening hours to be the source of the purest domestic happiness, the preservative of family innocence, blessed of God, and praised by all friends and acquaintance.

What we urge upon the attention of mothers is the value they should teach their children to attach to what the French call "lost moments," *moments perdus*, the little leisure moments or intervals that occur during the daily hours of labour, study, or occupation. *They*, too, ought to be applied to some special and profitable use.

Such moments in the day are like the grains of gold carried down from the mountain in the river streams, and mixed up with sand along their shores. Each grain in itself is of little account; but the miner knows its value, and his husbandry teaches him how to separate the grains of the precious metal from the dull, valueless matter in which it is buried, till, at the end of his day's toil, he has amassed the beginning of a treasure, and, with the persevering industry which adds together the gains of many successive days, he soon acquires a fortune. Do not the wise men of the world repeat to you daily that time is gold? Assuredly it is, even for the ends of the lower earthly life; but for the higher purposes

of life, and, in particular, for the highest of all, is not every second of time a grain of the golden sands? And are not these sands the "golden coins" with which we may purchase, not only all intellectual and moral excellence, but his friendship to whom alone belongs eternity?

WHAT CAN BE MADE OUT OF ODD MOMENTS.

This industrious husbandry of time, joined to persistence and perseverance in carrying out any good purpose, is, in itself, more than a fortune for every son and daughter of yours whom you will teach and help to acquire it.

We remember once travelling with a noble French lady and her husband, bearing one of the great historic names of his country, and from the moment the train left the station till it arrived in Paris, she and her daughter never ceased their knitting, thus preparing sundry articles for an orphanage they befriended. Every "lost" or "odd moment" of theirs was thus devoted to the poor. It is also well known how many useful arts, languages, and sciences have been, and are daily acquired by turning to good account these otherwise "lost moments." Indeed, it is on record that some of the most splendid monuments of which letters and the sciences can boast were begun and accomplished during these odd moments, which else would have been truly lost moments.

One sort of industry can be acquired by girls during these intervals between work and meals, or between one set occupation and another, and that is needle-work, including, of course, embroidery.

Needle-work, in our day, is becoming rather a comparatively rare accomplishment; machine-work tends to supersede the deft cunning which belonged to the fingers of our grandmothers. If sewing-machines only lightened the burden of our poor seamstresses and milliners! But we know that the hearts of our millionaire merchants become pitiless in proportion to the number of machines they employ, and as unfeeling towards the wants and hardship of the poor slaves who work them as the very steel and iron which replace the human hand.

But precisely because mechanical operations tend, in every department of industry, and in many departments of art, to take the place of handicraft, we ought to cherish, in all good families, intelligent skill in all kinds of handiwork. There are many, very many ladies, the most distinguished by birth, position, and accomplishments, who can do everything, and have taught their daughters to do everything, from painting, embroidery, and sewing of all descriptions, to the minutest details of cookery. Are they less dear to their households on that account? or are they less worshipped by husband and children? or less respected by servants and dependents? Our readers can answer for us.

VALUE TO BE ATTACHED TO PRACTICES OF DEVOTION.

If there is a most skilful and thrifty husbandry in thus employing time, and in acquiring the skill and habits which make one's existence most useful to others, and most delightful to the home-circle, there is a spiritual husbandry and science which are to be practised early and late by mother and daughters

Of the number of what are called "practices of devotion," or of their nature, this is not the place to treat: it is the province of the enlightened spiritual guide to direct the individual soul in their use.

We therefore confine ourselves to saying that it would not be wise in mothers to cumber their daughters with too many of these practices. But in these, as in morning and evening prayers, the recitation of the "Angelus," the preparation for the sacraments, the devout attention during the divine offices, it is impossible to insist on too much earnestness, reverence, and fervour.

Even the "devotions" which are not performed generally in non-Catholic countries, like the "Angelus," have a sublime sense to the Protestant mind when properly explained. For what can be more magnificent, in Catholic lands, than the custom when the Angelus bell sounds at dawn, and noon, and sunset, to see every man, woman, and child stand still, every head uncovered, and every knee bent to worship the Incarnate God, the Author of the Christian faith, the Second Parent of the human race, and to renew towards the Second Eve, the Mother of the new life, Gabriel's salutation, "Hail, full of grace! the Lord is with thee!" It is as if the united voice of Christendom, and in it the voice of the entire race, went up thrice each day to thank the incomprehensible Goodness, who sent his only-begotten Son to be the Teacher, Guide, and Consoler of the entire human family.

When the Wise Men in the Gospel had come from the far East to Bethlehem, and had been directed by the star to the wayside cave in which the Mother and

the Babe had found a refuge, they—first-fruits of heathendom—as if in the name of us all, "falling down, adored Him" on his Mother's knees. Is it not what we do still? And in this great city of New York, how many of our professional men, of our hard-worked business men, who interrupt every occupation when noon is nigh, to lift heart and silent voice to the throne of that same incarnate God, and unite their prayer with that of the Church the whole world over!

It was the universal custom in Catholic countries, at the sound of the Angelus or Ave Maria bell, that all labour and all conversation should cease in street, in field, on highway, in court and camp—all uncovered to join in the salutation. The great heart of the busy world stood still thrice a day, and forgot its pursuits and its cares, to salute Christ's Mother, and adore Himself! Was it not a sublime custom? And are those lands in aught the better to-day that so many do not worship Christ, or pay daily reverence to the true Mother of all the living?

And most beautiful, instructive, and improving are all these sweet immemorial practices of popular devotion—the sign of the cross, the use of holy water, of blessed candles, the devotion of the rosary, that of the way of the cross, and the love which the Church is labouring to enkindle and spread on every land towards that Heart which was pierced for us in death, and in which our names are written.

Let mothers be zealous not only in obtaining themselves full instruction on all these points, but in communicating it to their sons and daughters. Sons thus taught will not be apt, though going forth

from never so poor a home, to forget the early piety which lies so deep in mind and heart, or to turn away from the faith of their mothers; and such daughters will be its true apostles everywhere.

THE MOTHER'S GUIDANCE WITH RESPECT TO MATRIMONY.

There are two things which the true mother will not fail to do in order to save her child from a wrong choice, and from the irreparable misery it would bring.

The first is to accustom her to attach no importance whatever to a handsome face or fine personal appearance as compared with the higher qualities of goodness, purity of life, honour, truthfulness, temperance, and fortitude, all of which go to make up the one attribute of manliness in its true sense: add to this that which in God's present providence constitutes the perfection and glorious crown of manhood—enlightened and practical faith—and you will have placed before your daughter's mind the ideal husband to whom alone a true Christian maiden could give the worship of her love.

Nor need you, nor, indeed, ought you, to paint true manliness to the young girl with the avowed purpose of describing the only desirable husband, or even a husband at all. Form her judgment by making her prize the qualities that enter into such a character, and giving her a contempt of their opposites. That will be sufficient to prompt to a good choice when the proper time has come, and to keep her back from a wrong choice. Of course, when the thought of matrimony has come, it will be a no less

sacred duty for you to pray yourself, and to make your child pray, and seek in the sacraments new light and strength, never refused to all who ask for such in this momentous crisis of life.

The second is, without warning your child, to keep away from your home all young men who would not be desirable matches, and to invite or admit only those who are, in your judgment, and that of your husband, most likely to be worthy companions for the innocent girl you have reared. Remember that you have to consult your child's happiness infinitely more than your own; and, in selecting the man whom you would have for son in your family, select him unselfishly, for his own real worth and his pure devotion to your daughter, as well as because of her disposition, her heartfelt love for him, and the likelihood of their being truly devoted to each other through life.

If God has blest you with a good husband; if your mutual affection and your being all in all to each other have been, under God, the source of all your wedded bliss, and the secret, too, of your prosperity, then see to it well whether or not the young people whose union you desire are sure to be companions for each other. If not, let no inducement make you encourage a friendship or an acquaintance between them.

On this point every mother who has both a true womanly heart, and the fear of God before her eyes, will avoid with the utmost care the guilt and folly of so many women who, in choosing for their daughters, consult nothing but their own selfish liking or dislike, their worldly interest, the temporal advantages which

may accrue to themselves and the other members of their families, leaving entirely out of the question the inclinations of the poor girl herself, or her prospects of happiness or unhappiness.

Such conduct is highly criminal, and is sure to bring swift retribution with it.

VOCATIONS TO RELIGIOUS LIFE.

As to those of your daughters who feel called to the higher, the Virginal Life, do not presume to put obstacles in the way. There are many certain indications pointing out to a pious and unselfish mother's eye that her child is called to the divine service. There are rules laid down by God's Church, and sanctioned by the practice of so many centuries, all directing both the child herself in the examination of her own heart and its motives, and enlightening the priest and the theologian in his appreciation of all the reasons for and against such a vocation. If both your child and yourself are guided by the sole desire of doing God's will, and if you fervently pray Him to make that will known, there is little danger of your going astray.

If the mother, in a matter so weighty as this really seeks to find out what God wills, and is resolved to fulfil it, and not to prefer her own to it, then she will not manifest anger towards her child, abuse her as if she were attempting to do what is wrong and unlawful, or treat the priest who directs her as if he were stealing away her heart's treasure unjustifiably and unwarrantably.

You have brought up your daughters to love all that was best and holiest, to consider God's will as

the supreme law of angels and men, and God's service as the most honourable and blissful occupation of man or angel. Bless God when you have quietly and surely found out that your child wants to give herself to Him all the days of her life: take your child yourself to the altar, as Anna of old took her first-born, Samuel—her only one—and offer her to Him who will be her portion for ever, and reward your generosity with untold blessings.

II.

SPECIAL CARE NEEDED IN EDUCATING BOYS.

While bestowing such constant care on her girls, the Christian mother must be mindful of the special difficulties which attend the education of boys, of the terrible struggles which await men in the battle of life, and of the imperious necessity of so arming their souls in advance as to put all the chances of victory on their side. Your boy is doomed to battle with the general corruption, the low thoughts, the low aims, the low tastes, and the lower manners of the generation among whom his lot is cast; he will have to battle with inveterate and powerful prejudices against his faith, with a current of scientific opinion, gathering daily fresh depth and width, and tending to sap the very foundations of revealed religion; against the influence of a literature and a press bitterly hostile to all that he has been taught to look up to with reverence and worship; against a "human respect" more seductive and degrading than the witchery of the fabled enchantress of old, who only held out to thirsting lips a cup full of all delights, and

then changed all who had tasted it into beasts, and kept them beasts for ever; and, what is worse than all, he will have to battle with his own heart and its inclinations amid a world solely occupied in ministering to sensuality and passion. God alone, with his fear and his love firmly seated in the heart, while it is as yet free from sin and evil habits, will be all-powerful to give courage, and strength, and perseverance, and final triumph, even to the best and bravest against such a combination of adversaries.

See how many of the boys you behold yearly kneeling in our churches for first communion or confirmation fail to hold their virtue, or even their faith, firmly till manhood. If your eye could follow each generation as it grows up, the few who remain steadfast in the piety or faith of their youth are like the rare ears of corn on the harvest-field when the sickles of the reapers have disappeared, and the sheaves have been housed.

It is of all duties the most important, as well as the most difficult, to ground your boys in true piety, and in that true Christian manliness of which piety is the beautiful crown. Think of the heroic temper which the great Christian soldier mentioned in the following passage must have received from his mother's teaching, and consider well how you are to imitate her in your training of every boy of yours.

"When the venerable Marshal de Mouchy was led to execution for having protected priests and other devoted victims, as they were hurrying him from the Luxembourg, a voice was heard from the crowd saying, 'Courage, Mouchy! Courage, Mouchy!' The hero turned to them who were by his side, and

said: 'When I was sixteen years of age, I mounted the breach for my king; now that I am eighty-four, I shall not want courage to mount the scaffold for my God!'" *

Is not your purpose to form such true men as this, men so filled with *the sense of duty* that at sixteen they would be ready to brave death at the call of country, and in extreme old age brave the rage of an impious crowd, and the horrors of a public execution, to maintain the faith of their boyhood? Yes, here is the model man; one who has been taught and is accustomed from infancy to fear God alone, to serve Him in the performance of every civil and every religious duty, ready at any moment, from boyhood to the feeblest old age, to discharge conscientious duty fearless of every consequence. Whoso is true to God all through life cannot fail to be true to country and every trust imposed on him.

We have said above that the life of every Christian man must be an intellectual and moral warfare against error and infidelity. There are countries, too —Russia, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and France— where persecution is abroad, and likely not to end with the present century, and where, consequently, Catholic men must go forth from their mothers' homes filled with the spirit of the ancient martyrs and the more recent crusaders. Will you, mothers, who read this, prepare your sons for the strife, and fill them with the glorious spirit which shone in the

* Mazas, *Vies des Grandes Capitaines Français du Moyen Age*, tome iii., p. 220—as quoted by Digby in his "Broad Stone of Honour."

Seven Machabee Martyrs,* or that which St. Symphorosa poured into her seven boys? †

THE IDEAL OF TRUE MANHOOD.

There was, at the most hopeless period of the history of Christendom, and when the deluge of Barbarism seemed to have utterly swept away with the Roman empire the first growth of Christian civilisation, a man who went forth from Ireland at the head of a band of missionaries, and undertook to begin anew the labour of reviving throughout all Western Europe the love of religion, piety, letters, and gentleness. France, Germany, Switzerland, and Italy have never ceased to treasure the remembrance of his glorious services. It was an age of violence lawlessness, lust, and blood; and Columbanus set himself with his companions to raise high, high, and ever higher still, the level of divine love and supernatural excellence in their own hearts and lives, that they might thereby be enabled to raise the level of all goodness and excellence in the dark, warring, sensual mass of humanity around them. And thus these model men, the apostles of their age, passed through Gaul and Northern Germany and Italy like a vision of supernatural beings exalted between heaven and earth, compelling men to look up and admire and envy such unearthly goodness, drawing after them, as the vision passed to and fro, the hearts of the multitude and crowds of imitators, and thereby renewing slowly but surely the face of the earth.

Swarms of devoted disciples were left behind by

* See "Heroic Women of the Bible and the Church," ch. xix.
† "Lives of the Saints," July 18.

the great Irish patriarch, in numerous monasteries and monastic schools, which became in the surrounding districts centres of a new spiritual and intellectual renovation, till the earth began to rest once more from the convulsions and wars of centuries, and God's work through his Church began to prosper anew in peace and beauty and holiness of life.

It was an age of ruthless warfare and lawless violence, we have said; and these men had schooled themselves under their heroic leader to the use of weapons and methods which might beat down the lance of the robber and break the bloody sword of brutal power.

Would you know what was the IDEAL Columbanus set before himself, before those who gave themselves with him to a life of apostolic abnegation and labour, and to all who studied in their schools or sought to walk in the paths of Christian manhood under their direction? Here it is in brief. The Christian youth and man of that age, so much like our own in the deluge which sweeps over Christendom, should be:

"Fearless in the cause of Truth, but shrinking timidly from worldly contentions; before the Divine Goodness, like a beggar seeking alms, in presence of the wicked, like a soldier unconquered; docile as a babe towards his elders and superiors, running in the race of virtue with the ardour of a giant along with one's juniors; loving to be all in all to his equals, but straining every nerve to rise up to the level of the Perfect; meanwhile, never envying the excellence of those above him, nor showing jealousy of the swifter in the race, nor speaking ill of those who had kept him back, but responding promptly and generously to the voice of those who called on him to advance."

Here, then, O mothers, we place in your hand a mirror in which you can view at a glance all the chief characters of that true manhood on which you have to form your boys. Let each one of you call your son to look into this mirror with you, so that he may become enamoured of the divine likeness pictured therein. And let us take every one of these lineaments separately, and study it well, just as some painters do before copying a great master-piece, dividing the whole surface into small squares, so that they may be sure to reproduce exactly every feature and line.

FEARLESS IN THE CAUSE OF TRUTH.

On this leading feature of Christian manhood, we need not dwell at much length: what has been already said about the spirit of faith, and a life of faith, supposes that your boy has not only been thoroughly instructed in all that pertains to his religion, but that you have laboured to inspire him with an enthusiastic love of it, and a chivalrous zeal in its defence.

This chivalrous zeal is, however, the very point on which we would have you dwell for a few moments. The forms of ancient knighthood, as blessed by the Church in the ages of faith, have passed away; but the spirit of chivalry has not, and never will, so long as the faith of Christ is a living reality on earth. Hear, then, what is meant by that spirit, what virtues it supposes in the man who lives up to it, and what are its high practical obligations. We take the lesson from authentic history.

We are, in 1257, at Cologne, and assisting at a solemn ceremony—the knighting by a papal legate of

a young prince, elected King of the Romans, and soon to be crowned as Emperor of Germany. Mass has been celebrated, and William, Count of Holland, who has only reached the preparatory degree of squire, is presented to the legate in these words: "We place before you this squire, humbly beseeching that in your fatherly kindness you would accept his desires that he may become worthy of associating among knights."

To which the cardinal-legate replies, addressing himself to the young prince: "What is a knight according to the meaning of the word? Whoso desireth to obtain knighthood must be high-minded, open-hearted, generous, superior, and firm:—high-minded in adversity, open-hearted in his connections, generous in honour, superior in courtesy, and firm in manly honesty. But before you make your vow, take this yoke of the Order which you desire into mature consideration.

"These are the rules of chivalry: 1st. Before all, with pious remembrance, every day to hear the Mass of God's Passion. 2nd. To risk body and life boldly for the Catholic faith. 3rd. To protect Holy Church, with her servants, from everyone who will attack her. 4th. To search out widows and helpless orphans in their necessity. 5th. To avoid engaging in unjust wars. 6th. To refuse unreasonable (excessive) rewards. 7th. To fight for the vindication of innocence. 8th. To pursue warlike exercises only for the sake of perfecting warlike skill. 9th. To obey the Roman emperor, or his deputy, with reverence in all temporal matters. 10th. To hold inviolable the public good. 11th. In no way to alienate the feudal tenures of the

empire. 12th. And, without reproach before God or man, to live in the world.

"When you shall have faithfully attended to these laws of chivalry, know that you shall obtain temporal honour on earth, and, this life ended, eternal happiness in heaven."

When the solemn oath on the Gospels had been taken, the rank of knighthood was conferred on the kneeling suppliant in these words:

"For the honour of God Almighty I make you a knight, and do you take the obligation. But remember how He was smitten in the presence of the high-priest Annas, how He was mocked by Pilate the governor, how He was beaten with scourges, crowned with thorns, and, arrayed in royal robe, was derided before King Herod, and how He, naked before all the people, was hanged upon the cross. I counsel you to think upon his reproach, and I exhort you to take upon you his cross."

THE CHIVALROUS SPIRIT MOST NEEDED IN OUR DAY.

Most instructive and consoling are these monumental teachings of the past. They show how our ancestors considered our dear Lord as the Model of all manly generosity, devotion, and self-sacrifice. Looking over these rules, and substituting for the words "Roman emperor or his deputy," those of "lawful supreme authorities," and for "feudal tenures of the empire," the expression "national territory," we have a complete code of religious patriotism adapted to the sore needs of our own epoch, and most acceptable to every young man in love with the interests of religion, country, justice, and humanity

We cannot trust ourselves to dwell at length on so rich and tempting a topic. Many occasions will offer themselves before the end of this book for recalling now one rule and now another.

But no one can give a more eloquent and satisfactory illustration of this first point of his own legislation than Columbanus himself, the fearless, the heroic, the invincible amid persecutions which compelled him to go from province to province, and kingdom to kindgom. When driven from Burgundy by Queen Brunehild, and forced apparently to renounce forever the apostleship in the countries which he had so immensely benefited, he writes to one of his disciples whom he had appointed to govern his monasteries during this enforced exile:

"I had intended at first to write you a sad and tearful letter; but, knowing the weight of labour and anxiety that oppresses you, I have changed my style, and sought to dry up your tears rather than bid them flow. I have allowed nothing but sweetness to appear in my words, and have locked up my grief in the bottom of my heart.

"But lo! my own tears break forth! . . . They must be driven back, however; for a good soldier may not weep when just about to combat. After all, our misfortune is not a new one. Is not our fate what we so often preached to others to be continually prepared for? Was there not once a philosopher, excelling all others in wisdom, who was cast into prison for having maintained, in opposition to the popular belief, that there is but one God?

"Besides, the Gospel is full of such encouragements as we need. And, truly, one might think

that they were chiefly written to exhort the true disciples of Christ crucified to follow their Master, bearing each his own cross. Our dangers are many; the war which threatens us is raging fiercely, and our enemy is in every way formidable. But there is glory to be gained by the struggle. . . .

"Take away the enemy, and there is no struggle; and where there is no struggle there is no crown. . . . . Where one has to struggle, there one finds courage, watchfulness, earnestness, patience, fidelity, wisdom, firmness, and prudence. In the absence of this warfare there is but unhappiness and disaster.

"So, then, no struggle, no crown! And I add: no liberty, no worth or dignity!" *

The old man had been sent down the river Loire under escort to Nantes, in order to be thence sent on a ship to Ireland. While there, and waiting for the craft that was to bear him to his native country, he poured out his soul in exhortations and directions to his disciples in Gaul. His unbending firmness and fearlessness, which recall so vividly the prophet Elias, were united to a tenderness of heart, which reminds one of a mother's love for the dear ones she is leaving behind.

"While I am writing these words," the glorious old champion of Christian truth and morality says, in conclusion, "someone comes in to say that they are getting my vessel ready, the vessel that is to bear me towards my own country. The end of the parchment also forces me to make an end of writing. Love ignores logical order, and that is what makes this letter so confused. I wished to say everything in brief,

* Translated from Montalembert's *Moines d'Occident.*

but in vain. . . . Pray for me, dear hearts, that I may live for God alone!"

God, for whom alone he lived and laboured, interposed miraculously, and the vessel was driven back by the waves and stranded on the beach, while the apostle and his companions were sent to another of the Frankish kingdoms to continue their work of regeneration.

But from that classic beach at the mouth of the Loire does not that voice of power come to us across the deep, across the wide gulf of twelve centuries, to repeat to every Christian mother, and to every son she rears, the thrilling words: "Be the soldier of Truth. . . . Our dangers are many; our enemy is formidable; and the war in which we must share is raging fiercely. But the field of battle is the field of glory. No struggle, no crown! No liberty, no honour or dignity!"

LET YOUR SONS BE THEIR SISTERS' DEVOTED SERVANTS.

We cannot impress too earnestly this lesson upon you, whether you be the poor toiler in the cottage, or the wealthy mistress of a palace. Be such in your life, in your whole deportment, that your sons may believe that there does not exist on earth a mother or a woman like you. Let them be made to understand, as early as possible, that men are to treat all women with a sovereign respect. We once saw in one of the public conveyances of Paris a young nobleman, a foremost member of the Society of St. Vincent de Paul, get out of his place to help a poor, infirm old market-woman into the omnibus. She was cumbered with a large parcel, which he took from her, raising

his hat to her as if she were a duchess, and then gracefully and gently helping her to a seat. As we passed the market in which she worked, he got out before her, holding her parcel with one hand and giving her the other to assist her to alight; and then, taking off his hat, he kissed her hand to the no small astonishment of more than one of the passengers. She was only one of the many that he was in the habit of visiting weekly to distribute alms and spiritual comfort in the name of the Society. We did not venture to question this noble Christian youth about this demonstration of reverence to one beneath him. But a friend who knew him well said that he had been taught to reverence his own mother in every person of her sex, in the aged particularly, and to that he added the veneration which Christian piety inspires for all who are the recipients of our charity.

In such Christian families as his the familiarity which exists between brother and sisters is always accompanied with that feeling of profound respect for the weaker sex, of that invariable deference and courtesy which will keep a well-bred brother always on the watch to help or serve his sister in everything, even though no stranger or any other member of the family happen to be present. He is taught to be devoted to his sisters wherever they are, at home or abroad. And one who has that true reverential feeling towards his mother and sisters cannot help extending it to every member of their sex as long as he lives. Is there nothing here that appeals to your motherly sense of self-respect?

THE NECESSITY AND VALUE OF HOME-BRED COURTESY.

Home is, after all, the great school of virtue, of faith and piety, as well as of that gentleness and devotion to the comfort of others, which constitute the soul of courtesy. It was because the lower classes of old Catholic countries were so full of deep faith and sincere piety, that they displayed before the woeful changes wrought by revolutionism such mutual respect, such gentleness, such inborn courtesy. "God bless your work!" was the salutation which every stranger or wayfarer passing along the road addressed to the labourer at his work. And "God bless you kindly!" was the gentle response, as the ploughman looked away from his furrow, or the mason looked down from the wall he was rearing, or "God speed you safely!" was the answering prayer. No matter how poor the cottage, or how comfortable, no one crossed the ever-open door without the greeting, "God save all here!" and without hearing in return, "God save you kindly!" and "You are heartily welcome!" These forms of greeting are but straws on the surface of popular life and manners; but surely they indicated the direction in which the current ran, and were significant of a warm, deep feeling of faith and neighbourly charity.

Are we in aught the better for dropping these and so many other salutations and locutions from our vocabulary? Is our life in aught the happier, the more elevated or refined, because these currents are frozen or stand still? or because "freer, easier, more independent and careless manners" usurp the place of the sweet customs of Catholic ages? In the harvest-fields of Spain and Portugal, the labourers

will salute each other with words of praise and adoration in honour of the Holy Name, or in honour of the Immaculate Mother. And in conterminous fields one man or woman will take up the first verse of a well-known hymn, or of one of the glorious national ballads, and all the others will sing the next, and so on to the end, mixing religion with the popular songs which preserve the memory of the heroic achievements of their ancestors. Who does not see that such customs presuppose the highest civilisation in the masses, and the very essence of that courtesy which can be and is high-bred in the peasant and the cottier, because bred by faith and piety and the love of all that is ennobling in the memories of the past?

Home-bred courtesy is necessary from husband to wife and from wife to husband, from brother to sisters, and from sisters to brothers, else in what does the home of a Christian differ from that of a pagan, or even from the hut of a savage? And to be true courtesy it must not be a mask put on for an occasion and then laid aside, but a habit springing from the interior life, from the thoughts of the mind and the affections of the heart, just as the veins of the maple-wood, and the rich tints of the mahogany, and the lovely colours of the rose are the work of the vital sap in tree and flower, not the artifice of human industry.

But we specially insist on the necessity of home-bred courtesy for boys, and from their earliest boyhood, if you would have it become a second nature. We plead this necessity to every mother of the labouring and the middle classes. For, be it said without offence to any, the courtesy which distin-

guished the ancestors of these classes in the old European homesteads has been sadly forgotten in the new. People who rise in the world—and here it is free to all classes to rise—are anxious to show that they *are* rising or *have* risen, and hence that offensiveness of self-assertion or the no less offensive display of excessive politeness which are meant to tell the beholder that "we are somebody!"

Young people are quite earnest in claiming to be "ladies" and "gentlemen;" but the important thing is to be *gentle*, to possess that habitual *gentleness*, the sister of piety, which is sure to produce courtesy, and without which there never has been, and never will be a true lady or gentleman. Go into Andalusia: the Spanish farmer there will start from his home amid the mountains to carry his crop of wine twenty, forty, sixty miles or more to the nearest town, or further still to the best market. He will hear early Mass before he starts, and fill his pockets with dried figs and peppers, of which he will make his noonday meal on stopping at a well-known fountain or well on the road. The water is his only beverage, and there is not a well or a spring within hundreds of miles whose qualities he is not familiar with. His mules are laden with the rich wines which fetch so high a price in London and New York. But he never dreams of tasting them on his way. Speak to him on the road and you will be charmed with his dignity of manner and high-bred courtesy. Converse with him in the posada or inn where he spends the night, and you will have a still more favourable opportunity of estimating his real civility and intelligence. You will say that such a race is a race of gentlemen.

It behoves the poor man and the labouring man among us to see to it that these qualities once believed to be inborn in his own blood shall not disappear in his children and grandchildren. And surely it behoves the well-born and the wealthy that true courtesy shall not disappear from their homes with true piety.

We commend this reflection to mothers and fathers alike: can true piety be where a passionate temper rules the house, and where a blow and a curse are the usual accompaniments of reproof or punishment? We beseech parents to think well of this. Let them never suffer themselves to be rude towards their children; and let them never tolerate in these anything approaching to rudeness towards each other.

MOTHERS MUST NOT ALLOW THEIR DAUGHTERS TO BE THE SERVANTS OF THEIR BROTHERS.

There are sad examples of the fatal mistake made by certain unwise and weak mothers in giving their boys, as these grow up, so large a place in the house that their daughters either seem in the way, or are obliged to devote themselves to the pleasure and caprice of their brothers.

Two families are now present to our memory in which were contrasted the principles of a truly Christian education, as set forth above, and the fostering in the sons of this spirit of selfishness.

The latter was a home distinguished for its wealth; and when the sons, grown up and coming home from college, brought their young friends and acquaintance with them, they were allowed to be the absolute masters of the house, and to make their slaves of all

persons in it—parents, sisters, and servants. . These boys, thus made the gods of the household, whom all therein had to worship and obey, became utterly reckless of the comfort or happiness of everybody about them. Brought up in selfishness, they gave themselves up in manhood to self-indulgence and dissipation, broke the hearts of their foolish parents, beggared their sisters, married beneath them, and went every one of them to ruin.

Not so their next-door neighbours. They had seen better days before they came to their present abode. But the mother was the embodiment of all the gentle virtues that ever made home delightful. The sons, when the day's toil was ended, forgot, or seemed to forget, their own fatigue in making their mother and sisters happy. Every device that rare culture adorning heartfelt piety could think of was brought nightly into play to make the ladies believe that they were the princesses of a fairy palace. And this courtesy and gentleness of manners followed all of them through life. The eldest brother, in particular, distinguished for his masculine strength and chivalrous patriotism, was blessed with a wife, nurtured like himself by a wise, firm, and gentle mother. Their children, from the first dawn of reason, were sweetly habituated to that unselfishness and gentle courtesy which the unobservant stranger might mistake for weakness, but which, to the eyes of those who knew them well, were like the graceful and lovely creepers trained to adorn, but not to conceal, the fair proportions, rich material, and exquisite workmanship of some massive classic edifice.

It is thus that you have to work, O mothers.

Where what seems but is not courtesy or genuine politeness appears in a man or a woman, the least shock or commotion will show how superficial and hollow is the quality you might be tempted to admire. False courtesy is like a light veneering of beautiful wood, laid over the coarse grain of common material, or like the thin layer of plastering placed on the front of a building and painted to resemble marble or granite; but a slight knock will break this veneering and lay the natural coarse grain bare to the eye, and the first rain, or the first thaw after a frost will show that what you mistook at a distance for a marble palace was but a wretched sham.

It is the solid material of nature, enriched by a long and thorough nurture, that can receive a high polish and keep it forever. Be it your care, mothers, to form in the heart of hearts of every son and daughter of yours the solid, substantial piety and gentleness of which we have been speaking. This is the structure that you have to raise. Its solidity and its beauty, fear it not, will resist the pelting of rain and hail, survive the action of the summer's heat and the winter's frost.

MAKE HOME THE ONLY CENTRE OF AMUSEMENT FOR YOUR SONS.

The training of daughters is, comparatively, an easy and a delightful task for mothers, for their daughters are ever at home; but it is far otherwise with boys. An irresistible impulse leads these to seek companionship and amusement outside of the home. Hence arise most of the serious dangers and temptations for boys.

One of a good and wise mother's most useful industries is to make home *necessary* to her sons. Let her provide for them there everything which can amuse and delight, as well as instruct; and let her also encourage her boys to bring their young friends and companions home. She will thereby be able to see who and what these are, so as to select such as may be profitable companions and safe friends for after-life.

We need not insist on the prudence which a mother must use in keeping away from her home and companionship with her children the rude and the vicious. She has to avoid giving offence; she alone can find means to unite firmness, decision, and gentleness in guarding her dear ones from evil.

At any rate, when your boys have grown up, it must be a part of your duty to entertain hospitably such friends as they may invite to your home. Should you see in these qualities which render them unsafe companions for your children, your tact and motherly love will surely find a way to warn these against such associations. Only, let it be apparent in your whole conduct that you are solely guided by your sense of duty and the purest love for every child of yours.

Make it also your duty to accompany your grown-up sons and daughters to every sort of public amusement which you may sanction. If this precaution is a most necessary one in the case of your boys, it is indispensable in that of your girls. Oh! if parents among the labouring classes only knew the irreparable ruin caused every year by their permitting their young sons and daughters to frequent these abomina-

tions called low theatres and free dances, without a father or a mother's eye to overlook them! We say the same of "excursions," gotten up for no matter what purpose: no mother should allow her daughter to go to such places without accompanying her, and no father, who fears God, and has at heart the perseverance of his son in piety and purity, should permit him to mix with such gatherings without being there himself to protect him. Indeed, and the most enlightened and experienced will support us in the assertion, the less the children and young people of the labouring classes know of such assemblages and amusements the better will it be for the health of body and soul.

A CONCLUDING ADVICE.

We hear, on both sides of the Atlantic, of women of fortune founding institutions of charity, or rearing splendid churches at their sole expense. It does seem a noble undertaking on which to bestow one's fortune and one's labour, this rearing of a perfect temple to the worship of the most high God. But the formation in piety, in knowledge, in the practice of all goodness of a single child is, in the sight of God, a something far more glorious, far more meritorious. Time lays low the most solid, beautiful, and costly structures planned by human genius, reared and decorated by the rarest skill; but the soul of your boy is to outlive time itself, is destined to be happy with its Creator in eternity, when the sun himself will be quenched in the firmament, and the starry heavens folded up and cast aside like a worn-out garment.

Will you labour to enrich that dear soul with virtues whose energies shall fail not when even fire shall cease to burn, and light to be needful to the eye? Will you adorn it with these charities of earth and heaven which will form its ornament and its crown near the throne of God long after the last star will have ceased to shine in the immensities around us?

Oh! what temple can be compared to your child, for whom Christ died, whom He purchased from hell with his own blood, and whom He wills you to help in making a godlike man!

For this you need no fortune, no riches, nothing but the love and devotion, the industry and perseverance of a true woman's, a true mother's heart.

When the poor, persecuted, but fearless prophet, Elias, had to fly his own country and take refuge among the enemies of his God and his race, he was bidden to go to a poor widow-woman at Sarephta, on the sea-coast. "When he was come to the gate of the city, he saw the widow-woman gathering sticks, . . . and said to her: Give me a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And when she was going to fetch it, he called after her, saying: Bring me also, I beseech thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand. And she answered: As the Lord thy God liveth, I have no bread, but only a handful of meal in a pot, and a little oil in a cruse; behold, I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die." *

Surely here was poverty on the part of the mighty

* 3 Kings, xvii.

prophet, who could shut up the heavens for seven years, and the very extremity of destitution on the part of this generous-hearted widow. She gave to the man of God all she had in the world, all that stood between death by hunger, and her boy and herself!

God repaid her well, however; hunger was provided against by the prophet's miraculous power, and a still greater miracle rewarded both mother and son, for the latter was brought back by Elias from death to life.

How, think you, after this wonderful providence over herself and her only one, ought this mother to have reared her boy? In the full knowledge, the unbounded love, and the faithful service of the God of Israel. Indeed, the Jewish traditions say that she gave up the lad to Elias to be his servant and inseparable companion ever after. She is mentioned by our Lord in the Gospel; her memory, and that of her boy shall live among men as long as the world itself; and in eternity they shall shine like twin stars among the hosts of the blessed.

So this poor but great-souled woman made her son like herself, ever ready to give everything, even life itself, for God and the poor! Do not say that you are too poor to rear godlike sons.

Are you a wealthy or a noble mother? Then remember the widowed mother of the great St. John Chrysostom. She lost her husband, a general officer in high command in the imperial armies, when she was in her twentieth year. Though solicited and pressed to marry again, being very beautiful and wealthy, the noble lady resolved to give her life to

God and the education of her infant son. Thenceforward her whole time and industry were devoted to that divine labour of forming a man worthy of being a true follower of Christ. Other masters aided her, when early boyhood was over, to cultivate his mind, but the culture of that great heart was her work. And how beautiful was that heart, how god-like the life of St. John Chrysostom, the admiration of fourteen hundred years can attest.

But you may think that the examples of these remote ages do not apply aptly to our own; that the heroines of Scripture, or the heroic women of the early Church, are too far above the mediocrity, the commonplace virtue of modern times. This we do not admit. Soldiers in a vast camp covering many miles of plain and forest can see but little of what is passing around them, and hear only the voices of their immediate neighbours. Those who come after us will be like people looking down from a lofty vantage-ground on camp and battle-field, taking in at a glance whole armies and their positions, and marking the actions of the most heroic. A hundred years hence the names of the saintly in life will be brought out distinctly in the annals of God's Church by the action of the Spirit of Truth, who abideth with her evermore. And who can say how many heroic souls may thus shine forth resplendently from what seems to our near-sightedness a mass of undistinguishable mediocrity?

LET YOUR SONS BE GOD-FEARING AND SELF-RELIANT.

We pause here. There is no home that our voice can reach in which this simple lesson may not be

thoroughly appreciated by even the most poverty-stricken, and taken to heart by her sons, if the mother will only understand aright her own best interests even in this world. No man is braver than the God-fearing man, no man has more self-respect and true self-reliance. Were we to succeed in making the sons of our labouring poor to be at once God-fearing and self-reliant, we should not begrudge devoting to the illustration of these noble qualities every hour of life that God may spare us, so deeply are we convinced that the fear of God is the strong foundation of all true manliness, and that one of the most precious attributes of Christian manhood is that humble self-reliance springing from the certainty of his ever-present grace, and the continual generous sense of duty.

We resume our teaching in this chapter, by repeating that if mothers will only be faithful to co-operate with the Holy Spirit in this great work of making of their sons true children of God, together with the natural "great qualities and admirable talents" bestowed on them by the Creator, the culture we have been detailing will be sure to result in producing noble Christian men and model citizens. Everyone who will know a son of yours brought up in this fashion will say of him in life and death: "I find in him these virtues without which all (natural) excellence is deformity, namely, modesty, meekness, tranquillity, religion, sanctity, and integrity." What a panegyric such praise would be both for mother and for son!

No less perfect and admirable would be the women sent forth from every home in our midst. Let young

girls take the following words as they would a nosegay of rarest and sweet-scented flowers, and enjoy, again and again, their delicious perfume:

"All virtue lies in woman, and the health of the world. God has created nothing so good as a woman. No one can find a limit to the praise of women. He who can tell where the sunshine ends may also proclaim the end of their praise. Women are pure, and good, and fair, they impart worthiness, and make men worthy. Nothing is so like the angels as their beautiful form, and even the mind of an angel dwells in woman." *

TRUTH IN ACTION INSEPARABLE FROM THE PROFESSION OF TRUTH.

To your sons and daughters alike, to such noble young men and women as the Church expects you to prepare for society, we commend these golden words of one of the greatest men of all time, and the loveliest saint of modern times: †

"For all the estates of Savoy and France, and for the whole empire, I would not carry a false paper in my bosom. I belong to the blood of the ancient Gauls. What is on my tongue is precisely what comes from my heart. The prudence of the world and the artifices of the flesh belong to the children of the world; but the children of God have no double meaning and no dissimulation."

Or again: "The spirit of chivalry" (common to all true Christian men and women) "is, to the highes

* Ulrich von Lichtenstein's *Frauendienst.*

† St. Francis of Sales.

degree, delicate and susceptible: once convince it that an action is base and criminal, and it shrinks from it with a depth of moral feeling such as leads the poet in the Indian legend to represent sin as something so incapable of concealment that every transgression is not only known to conscience, and to all divine spirits, but felt with a sympathetic shudder by those elements themselves, which we call inanimate; by the sun, moon, fire, air, the heavens, the earth, the flood, and the deep, as a crying outrage against nature, and a disarrangement of the universe."*

* Digby.

CHAPTER XIV.

DUTIES OF THE MISTRESS OF THE HOME TOWARDS HER PARENTS AND HER SERVANTS.

I.

It will not, we trust, be deemed superfluous, if we close these chapters treating of the dignity and the duties of the mistress of the home as wife and mother, by reminding her that she stands herself in the relation of child to those who are her own or her husband's parents. Marriage among us, and by virtue of the laws which govern us, dissolves the tie of obedience which children till then owed to their parents. But the obligation of reverence and love remains through life.

The patriarchal system, which prevailed in the first ages of the world, made the parental authority much more absolute and persistent: the married groups, though living outside of the patriarch's home, continued none the less to pay him, as long as he lived, not only love and reverence, but entire obedience. That his wife had her full share of his authority there is every reason to believe, though it was restricted to the sphere of purely domestic duties. There remains, however, among one of the most ancient races on earth—the Chinese—laws and

customs dating from time immemorial, which throw no little light on the probable nature and extent of maternal authority and influence in the remotest historical times.

The ancient laws of China give a father the fullest power over his children—all power, indeed, save that of life and death—and this power lasts as long as life, and follows the children in every position or rank they may occupy. The son of a peasant may become a mandarin, the governor of a province, a prime minister, a commander-in-chief; but the son, though never so far in rank and social position above his parents, is still bound to the same rigorous obedience, the same duties of reverence and filial piety.

A commander-in-chief will come down from horseback, in presence of his whole army, to do homage to his father or mother; a magistrate will descend from his seat of authority as soon as he perceives his parent in the audience. In the imperial court the person most honoured and revered, by sovereign and courtiers alike, is the emperor's mother. And this holds good in every family, high or low, in the kingdom; the parents are the absolute sovereigns of their own little home-empire.*

This universal reverence for parental authority is the very basis of social and domestic life, as well as of the political constitution of this vast empire, comprising one-third of the entire human race. And second only to this deep-seated filial piety is the respect for old age.

* See most instructive details in F. le Play's *Ouvriers des Deux Mondes*, vol. iv., p. 116. Paris, 1862.

"Honour, as you would your own father, whoever is twice as old as yourself, and respect, as if he were your elder brother, the man who is ten years older than you." Such is the prescription of the *Li-ki*, the great Chinese Ritual. Hence natives of that country will bestow the title of *lao-yeh*, "venerable father," on every man whom they wish to treat with respect.

Again, when a man has rendered illustrious services to his country, or deserved in any way to be raised to the rank of noble, the rank is conferred on his parents, not on himself. "The reason is," says the *Li-ki*, "that we easily persuade ourselves that the parents of a virtuous man must have been themselves models of virtue."

"The more I consider," says the Emperor Kang-hi, "the principles which induced the ancient emperors to govern the world by the sentiments of filial piety, the more am I convinced that they wished thereby to go back to the original form of government, and to insist on what is essential to it. Filial piety is the principle and the term of all virtue."*

We have gone out of the beaten path of illustration to show how ancient, wide-spread, and deep-seated is this beautiful sentiment of filial piety, the religion of the sweetest and holiest gratitude.

No mother who is true to nature but will, as age advances, and as her dear parents draw near the grave, exert herself to show them all love, honour, and reverence. In the last chapter we have shown

* Quoted by Le Play, *ibidem*, p. 122.

her how necessary it is to impress these sentiments on the heart of her children. Let her believe it; it is her own interest we were then pleading. And it is her own happiness we wish to promote by what we say here. The young and active and energetic mother of to-day will be the aged, feeble, helpless invalid of to-morrow, to whom the loving looks and loving words, the heartfelt reverence and veneration of her dear ones, will be the sweetest of all rewards.

One can have a father and a mother but once: while they are yet with us we prize not as we ought the treasure their presence is to us, and we often allow the preoccupations and pangs of the day to make us overlook the duty of giving ourselves heartily to making them comfortable and happy. We hope to be in a better mood on the morrow. But that morrow never comes with the hoped-for opportunities, and brings with the grief of their loss the keen regret of having neglected those who never neglected us.

NEVER PUT YOURSELVES IN YOUR CHILDREN'S POWER.

We formulate our advice this way, in order that all our readers may examine their consciences on this point.

"Give not," says the Divine Book, "to son or wife, brother or friend, power over thee while thou livest; and give not thy estate to another, lest thou repent and thou entreat for the same. As long as thou livest and hast breath in thee, let no man change (dispossess) thee For it is better that thy

children should ask of thee, than that thou look towards the hands of thy children."*

There are but too many eloquent examples around us of the unwisdom of parents who heed not the voice of the inspired teacher; of parents who left native land and gave a whole life of earnest and uninterrupted labour to making a fortune and creating a comfortable home for their children, slaving and almost starving themselves to give them education and a position, and whose great heart could not withhold their hands from giving their dear ones everything with the new homes in which they saw them wedded and well-to-do. And how many such fathers and mothers have been, and are still, left to pine in neglect and poverty by the very children they loved all too unwisely!

"A wise son maketh a father joyful: but the foolish man despiseth his mother. Honour thy father in work and word, and all patience. That a blessing may come upon thee from him, and his blessing may remain in the latter end. The father's blessing establisheth the houses of the children: but the mother's curse rooteth up the foundation. Of what an evil fame is he that forsaketh his father! And he is accursed of God that angereth his mother!"†

The real practical difficulty in the way regards not so much, perhaps, a woman's reverence towards her own parents, as what is due to those of her husband. Nor does the discharge of this duty offer so

* Ecclus. xxxiii. 20, 21, 22.
† *Ibidem*, iii.

much hardship when parents retain their own home, and are independent of their married children. Heart-burnings mainly arise when they have to look to these for support, and often become unbearable when they have to reside beneath the same roof.

Then it is that the mistress of the household needs to look up to God for her motives and her rules of action. We put aside the case of women who are so unnatural and so unchristian as to forget what is due to their own aged parents, to their husbands, and the venerable persons to whom these owe their birth, and, it may be, the very roof which covers the ungrateful wife. A husband's father and mother become, by marriage, the wife's father and mother; policy, mere worldly wisdom and practical good sense, in the absence of the divine law, ought to teach her that her peace and her interest would be best secured by loving her parents-in-law.

We suppose the mother who reads this is most anxious to have God's blessing, the love and respect of her husband and children: all this she can only have by showing a true and heartfelt affection for the persons who stand, within her home, as the representatives of God's fatherly power and love. No blessing can rest upon a home where the wife and mother makes life a burden and the bread of life most bitter to the parents she is privileged to have near her.

To encourage all good mothers—women true to the noblest instincts of nature and the most solemn teaching of the divine law—let us rather warm our hearts in the light of heroic examples, such as very many in all classes may behold around them daily.

Two young people, of excellent family both of them, had married, with the full approbation of the wife's parents, who were wealthy and much respected, but sorely against the will of those of the husband, of his mother especially.

There was perfect equality on both sides. But the young man, during a tour on the continent of Europe, had embraced the Catholic faith, and this circumstance, on his return home, had led to his intimacy with the family into which he married. Bitter religious prejudice lay at the bottom of the opposition made by both his parents, while his mother persisted in saying to everyone that he had been inveigled into a change of religion by his beautiful bride. The truth was, that the young people had scarcely been acquainted when the change took place, and there certainly was then no attachment on either side.

The young man was disinherited; but this cruel treatment did not shake either his faith or his affection. He was further driven to hasten his nuptials by a cruel and scandalous report concerning the lady, started, too, by his own mother. Never was scandal so unfounded and so malignant.

But it only injured the originators. The innocent child herself was kept in total ignorance of the rumour, and the other relatives of the gentleman's family vied with each other in showing their detestation of the slander.

The bridegroom was too high-minded to beg favours from his bigoted father, and too independent to accept from his father-in-law the handsome settlement which the latter wished to make in his favour.

He had a good and lucrative profession; he was himself accomplished, self-reliant, and trustful in God's protection; he loved his young wife with that deep love of pure hearts which is deepened tenfold by the grace of the sacrament. And, not rashly confident of his own ability, he fixed his residence in a large city far away from his native place. Success came to him with the divine blessing, which they both sought so earnestly; and year after year he rose higher and higher in his profession and in the esteem of all who knew him. His wife looked up to him with a sort of worship, founded on the intimate knowledge of his worth, of the talents and learning which were sanctified by a piety so enlightened and so simple. No home could be happier than theirs; no bliss, the little wife and mother thought, could equal hers. She was afraid of its very excess, and begged our dear Lord daily to send her a cross which should temper the unalloyed sweetness of her lot. It came in his good time.

She had been several years married, when an accident made her acquainted with the scandal about herself set afloat by her mother-in-law. Its real malignity, however, only dawned on her by degrees, and thus the terrible force of the blow was broken. Nevertheless it nearly crushed her; and it required all her husband's tenderness and all her own piety and strength of soul to sustain her. She had a very serious illness; for the rumour in its worst aspect only reached her a very short time after the birth of her second child. While she was thus in serious danger, her husband wrote to his father informing him of the critical state to which the innocent young

wife was brought by an infamous slander originating with his own mother.

The father, who had not lost all feeling for his son, and who, besides, was proud of his rising fame, was heart-stricken on receiving the letter. He had heard of the report against his daughter-in-law, but never fancied that the vile slander had his own wife for author. He for one did not and could not believe it. His fault lay in his bigotry, his exaggerated notions about a father's authority over his son's conscience, and in the obstinacy with which he adhered to a determination once taken. From every direction he had heard his daughter-in-law praised for every quality of mind and heart and person, for all the sweet virtues that can make a perfect woman, wife, and mother; and more than once he felt disposed to relent towards his son. The letter filled him with equal grief and indignation.

But his wife only met his reproof and his questions with haughty scorn and a fiercer denunciation of her son, as a most ungrateful child, and of his sick wife as a crafty, scheming hypocrite. Leaving his partner to the evil passions that possessed her, he hastened to his son's home, atoned with manly frankness for his own harsh conduct, embraced his daughter and her babes with all a father's tenderness, assured the patient sufferer that no one among all his kinsfolk or acquaintance ever gave credit to the absurd report, and by his generous reparation recalled the sick one to health and happiness once more. His wife, he said, would not delay to see the wrong she had done and to atone for it, and thus the happiness of his children seemed complete.

But the inevitable atonement was to be made sooner than he anticipated, and in a way that he could not foresee. During his absence his house—the ancient home of his family—was burned to the ground. No one could tell how the fire began; and as it was in the country, with a high wind blowing at the time, no effort of servants or neighbours availed to save the building, with its precious furniture and library. The mistress of the house was, it was said, herself severely injured in the confusion.

These tidings reached her husband when half way on his homeward journey, and seemed to his conscience like a judgment on his wife's unnatural cruelty and his own harshness and obstinacy. No sooner, however, had his son and daughter-in-law heard of the calamity, than the latter, with the impulse of true charity, besought her husband to fly at once to his parents, and to bring his mother back with him, that she might receive from their hands all the tender care her misfortune and injuries needed.

With what eagerness the young husband hastened to comply with his wife's God-inspired entreaty the Christian reader will easily conceive. He found his mother only slightly bruised, though sorely afflicted in spirit. The hand of God, in striking her in its justice, had also touched her heart in its mercy. She had done many acts of true charity in her life, and these now pleaded for her with that Wisdom which disposeth all our ways for its own ends.

No mother ever received from the most tenderly loved child so warm a welcome as she received from her daughter-in-law. It was truly a merciful dis-

pensation. Soon after the burning of his mansion, the sturdy old gentleman learned that the bulk of his fortune, invested in what had till then been a most prosperous venture, had been utterly swept away by the failure of the concern. This news brought on a fit of apoplexy. He lingered, half-paralysed, in his son's house, where the most devoted care of his angelic daughter-in-law, and all the comforting assurances of his son, availed not to raise the crushed spirit. He died under the effects of a second stroke of the fell disease, but not till he had again and again prophesied to the angel who watched by him night and day that she would surely be blessed in her children. "You are more than a perfect woman, my love," he would say; "you are an angel, and the very atmosphere of your house is heavenly." So he passed away, finding in death what he had not else known, the perfect road which leads to God, and that perfect peace which worlds cannot purchase.

His widow survived him for several years. She was given time to expiate her sin. A cruel cancer in the neck tried her patience to the utmost and proved the generosity of the daughter she had so deeply wronged, and whom she had learned to love with a love she had never known till then. Month after month did that devoted one and her husband lavish on their parent every mark of the most untiring affection. The side of the house in which her apartment was had to be given up to her, so nauseating was the odour which the frightful sore emitted. Yet her room was kept like a paradise. One of the young wife's sisters, worthy of her in every way, volunteered to assist her in taking care of the sufferer. She, too,

felt like her husband, that this was true charity, and wished to die in the faith of her forefathers. She needed all the sublime consolations which it imparts. For the priest who ministered to her frequently in the last stage of the terrible disease often declared afterwards that, accustomed as he was to every form of human suffering, he never had beheld anything comparable to the appalling loathsomeness of that death-bed.

And yet there the heroic son would remain with his parent, hour after hour, reading her some sweet passage from the "Imitation of Christ," a few verses from the history of the Passion, or reciting with the agonised patient some favourite form of prayer. There, too, the angelic forms of his wife and sister-in-law moved about silently, whispering from their pure, brave hearts such words of love and comfort as true women's hearts alone can find.

"Read me these beautiful words once more," she could barely say, in an almost imperceptible whisper to her daughter-in-law, as midnight on Good Friday was at hand. Her son was absent on most urgent business, and no one was in the sick-room but the devoted little wife. And she read from the "Imitation" the 21st chapter of the third book, beginning: "Above all things and in all things do thou, my soul, rest always in the Lord, for He is the eternal rest of the saints." When the other had read down to the words, "In fine, above all angels and archangels, and all the host of heaven," the dying woman pressed the hand held in hers. Then, as the other looked up, she motioned to her to continue, and just as the last words, "Above all that is not Thee,

my God!" she repeated thrice audibly, while a light seemed to overspread her features, "Thee—Thee—my God—my God!" and expired.

II.

DUTIES TOWARDS SERVANTS.

It would be a strange inconsistency if a truly Christian mistress, fearing God herself, and making his love and service the chief purpose of her life, should fail to be towards her servants much more of the mother than the mistress.

Among God's people, before the coming of Christ, though the servants in the family were either slaves belonging to the master, or free men and women who had bound themselves to temporary service, the heads of the household were obliged not only to treat these dependents with humanity, but to secure to them all the precious benefits of the faith and hope in the Redeemer. Thus, the true religion formed a bond of brotherhood between the inferiors and the superiors. Under Christianity slavery was gradually done away with by the very force of the doctrine and sentiment of brotherhood working on heart and mind among all classes.

The beautiful sentiment of Ecclesiasticus:—"If thou have a faithful servant, let him be to thee as thy own soul: treat him as a brother"—sounds almost like some gospel precept. But this last verse in the chapter is preceded by several injunctions or practical rules concerning stubborn or vicious servants, that a slave-master might easily pervert to his own purposes.

ST. PAUL AND THE FUGITIVE SLAVE.

Compare with this the divine charity which shines forth in St. Paul's Epistle to Philemon. This man, a citizen of Colossæ, in Phrygia, and a convert to Christianity, had a slave called Onesimus, who fled from his master to Rome, after having wronged him in some serious manner. In the great city the fugitive came within the influence of St. Paul, then imprisoned, but who was left a certain freedom to preach the Gospel, and help in spreading it among all those who had recourse to him. Onesimus became not only a convert, but a most zealous and efficient assistant to the great apostle. For, in those days, the fortunes of war reduced the vanquished to bondage, and thus men of the noblest birth and the highest culture were brought down to the condition of slaves. Onesimus, apparently, was anxious or willing to repair the wrong he had committed towards his master; at any rate, he consented to fulfil the prescriptions of the civil law, which compelled the return of fugitive slaves to their masters.

But in the case of Onesimus, the conversion to Christianity of both master and slave entirely changed the sentiments with which each regarded the other, although it did not do away formally with the power of the former over the latter. So the aged Paul, from his prison, sends back Onesimus to Colossæ, intrusting to him a letter or epistle for the young church springing up in that city, and another to Philemon, in commendation of the bearer himself:

"Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus, . . . to Philemon, our beloved and fellow-labourer. . . .

Though I have much confidence in Christ Jesus to command thee that which is to the purpose, for charity's sake I rather beseech, whereas thou art such an one, as Paul, an old man, and now a prisoner also of Jesus Christ: I beseech thee for my son, whom I have begotten in my bonds, Onesimus. . . . Do thou receive him as my own bowels (my own heart). . . . Not now as a servant, but instead of a servant, a most dear brother, especially to me. . . . If, therefore, thou count me a partner, receive him as myself."

THE DOCTRINE OF UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD IN CHRIST.

This was a language never heard before. The sentiments it expresses, the great doctrines of universal brotherhood and a common calling to the inheritance, with Christ, of an eternal glory, leavened thenceforward the hearts and minds of men, and changed the face of the world. In our day there are found men who would set aside this divine brotherhood and all its humanising influences, and bring back the reign of the darkest Pagan materialism. Christian homes and hearts sanctified by all the charities which a living faith in Christ begets, must be the firm bulwark against this impure and rising tide.

IMPERIOUS NECESSITY OF WINNING THE HEARTS OF ONE'S SERVANTS.

It behoves every Christian mistress and mother, as she loves her own children, and labours to make them live up to the sublime duties of their religion.

even so to love her servants dependent on her motherly charity, and looking to her, under God, for instruction, edification, care, and comfort in health and sickness.

Later, in a separate chapter, we shall see what are the special duties to be fulfilled by servants themselves, and the special excellence to which they can attain. Be it sufficient in this place to hold the mirror of her own duty up to the true woman, so that she can see in it the model of a perfect mistress, as we have already shown her the image of a perfect wife and mother.

HOW SERVANTS SHOULD BE BOUND TO THEIR MASTERS

'I have collected certain instructions," says an old author, "and composed almost an art of friendship between rich and powerful men and persons poor and of low condition, to whom has been applied the odious name of servitude. What domain is more fertile than domestic charity? Is it not better that our house should be in the charge of true friends of good will, rather than in that of men who evince, I do not say love, but not even the shadow of love? Such servants have only one object—to steal and get rich as soon as possible; but if you lift them up into the sphere of friendship, of free and kindly regard, what immense utility shall we not derive from their assistance? For then they love their masters tenderly, spare no pains, and expose themselves to all dangers for them. This friendship, if we do not trample humanity under our feet by our pride, . . will certainly spring up of itself and increase; for nothing is more natural than to love those who

dwell under the same roof with us; and, certes, nothing can happen more advantageous to a man than to live in the same household with another man, when of suitable manners."*

THE GOLDEN RULE.

"I knew a lady, who now lives in heaven," says Luis de Leon; "the persons who served her never left her without being prized the more for having lived with her. It happened once that she was obliged to dismiss one of her servants without having done him all the good that she desired, and I often heard her say that she was disconsolate at the thought of a person, once intrusted to her by God, departing from her house without having been benefited by the stay." †

Unquestionably, these are the ideas by which every head of a household ought to be governed in her relations with her servants. They are "intrusted by God" to her, that she may do them all the good she can, and make them in every way as good as she can. They are a charge committed to her, not to be kept in the ignorance and moral deficiencies with which they came to her service, but to be improved in every way, not merely for the sole motive of self-interest, as Della Casa suggests, but because they are a trust for which we must be accountable to God.

AIM HIGH IN PERFORMING YOUR DUTY.

We know by our sad experience that we seldom succeed, when we aim high, in hitting the mark we

* Della Casa, "Treatise on Duties."
† Quoted by Digby.

aim at. We fail in our best and calmest resolutions to do exactly as well as we purposed; indeed, it is to the most generous a constant source of regret and self-reproach that their performances fall short of the promises made to their own soul.

In the performance of one's duty towards one's servants, then, how can one best secure a high degree of merit and a great amount of good done to them? The first extract we gave exhorts masters and mistresses to make "friends" of their servants and dependents, because "then they love their masters tenderly, spare no pains, and expose themselves to all dangers for them." This attachment, being based on a motive of self-interest, may not be either very lasting or very exalted. There are servants deeply attached to vicious masters, because the attachment is founded on community of enjoyments, pursuits, and vices. We shall secure a more exalted, permanent, and purer friendship, and a more loyal and generous service, by following the practice of the noble Spanish lady mentioned by Luis de Leon—by considering every servant who enters our household as a needy brother sent us by the Shepherd of souls, that we may receive the stranger as we would Christ Himself, that we may guard that soul and respect it, as we would the Body taken down from the cross and given over to our care, or the pierced Heart taken from out the yawning side. This is the model—the only practical rule to set before ourselves—to keep the deposit of that precious soul sent to us, as we would keep the sacred treasure of Christ's Heart.

HOW SERVANTS WERE TREATED IN ALL CATHOLIC COUNTRIES.

Nor was this religious sentiment of brotherhood and equality in Christ confined to the Spanish peninsula; it reigned throughout all Christian nations. In every princely and noble family lived a chaplain, whose special care and duty it was to devote himself to the spiritual welfare of the servants and dependents, to instruct them thoroughly in the Christian doctrine, and to afford them every facility and encouragement for the reception of the sacraments, and the advancement in holiness of life. Nor did this dispense the lord and lady from seeing to it in person that the chaplain did his duty, and that their household was one in which God, before and above all things, was served and honoured. The Sundays and feasts of obligation were duly sanctified by all; and in more than one country the law of the Church and that of the State enjoined that, on the eve of these days, servants and others should be allowed to retire early, in order to be up in time for Mass the next morning. How many Catholic masters and mistresses sin grievously in this respect in our day and country!

MASTERS AND MISTRESSES ANXIOUS FOR THE PROGRESS OF THEIR SERVANTS IN HOLINESS

More than that, in these ages of faith of which modern ignorance and fanaticism speak so sneeringly, all Christian masters and mistresses were anxious that their entire households should have the very same advantages for instruction which they had

themselves. St. Paulinus, Archbishop of Aquileia, thus instructs his immediate Sovereign, Henry, Duke of Friuli: "Entreat all who are in your house to do whatever they do humbly before God; for whatever a man doeth with pride can never please God. In all their actions let them be humble; for no one can come to the kingdom of God unless by humility. All labours, prayers, alms, fasts, and vigils, if performed with pride, are accounted as nothing before God. . . . Prescribe to all your domestics, and those subject to you, to abstain from pride, and to live temperately, justly, piously, and holily before God; for Christ shed his blood not alone for us clergy, but for the whole human race. There is no acceptation of persons with God; for the celestial palace opens its doors to the laity who keep the divine commandments, as well as the clergy and those who bear the monk's habit; for we are all one in Christ. . . . Love your Head with your whole heart, and the members of that Head. How can the hand hate the hand, or the foot the foot? All the members ought to grow up lovingly together into the perfect man."*

This sentiment of Christian equality made masters and mistresses in the highest households call all their servants "children," and the custom still survives in lands where faith and piety have long since waned. More than that—it was held wise and proper to make both sons and daughters mix with the servants in the performance of the menial household duties. The heroic Bayard relates that he had to do so in his father's house; and Marina de Escobar says that her

* Quoted by Digby.

mother, although having a numerous retinue of servants, "used, as a prudent woman, always to make her daughters apply to domestic exercises, along with the maids."

THE CHARITY OF THE MISTRESS BEGETS LOVE IN THE SERVANTS.

Where the old Catholic spirit, the true spirit of Christian charity, reigns in a household—thanks to a pious and zealous mistress—servants cannot fail to become attached to their masters, to consider themselves as members of the family, having the same interests, affections, hopes, and fears, as they have the same faith, returning love for love in view of Him who is the Elder Brother of us all. Our ancestors were not fond of changing servants, precisely because the servants were not fond of changing masters. The charity which bound together the entire household was utterly opposed to the selfishness of our times. Our grandmothers had a saying which we would heartily commend to the meditation of their daughters and granddaughters: "The herb one knows, one ought to tie well to one's finger."

An author of the early part of the last century cites, for the instruction of after-ages, an example of this mutual attachment of servants and masters. "What a charm," says he, "when masters and servants grow old together! What a joy to old age, when it is served by ancient domestics, accustomed to its mode of life! There are families thus favoured. I have known no house happier in this respect than that of the great Séguier, Chancellor of France. All his servants had grown old with him; so that if one

did not always see the same faces, one saw always the same persons. As their constitutions were not so strong as his own, most of them broke down on the way; and he saw them perish before himself, leaving but little behind them, though after forty years' service in the house of a chancellor. All this must be regarded as a part of the felicity of this great man, adding to the sweetness of his old age."*

THE TIE OF CHARITY LOOSENED IN MODERN SOCIETY.

Certain it is that the spectacle offered in any of our cities, when, in answer to an advertisement for a servant, hundreds of ill-clad, half-starved, and most uncomely-looking creatures besiege the door of the advertiser, and crowd the street and the sidewalk—was a thing unseen and unheard of a century ago, even in European countries, far less in this New World of ours. It is a sight which might have been witnessed near the great marble palace of one of our prince merchants twenty-four hours before this was written; and it is a sad commentary on the Christian charity which is supposed to govern the relations of masters and servants in this land of fraternity and equality.

How is this gulf, which selfishness and uncharitableness have opened between the wealthy and the poor, between the class which counts masters and mistresses, and the poor who have to serve and to work, to be housed and fed and clothed, this gulf which unbelief and radicalism are deepening and

* Le Baron de Prelle, *Considérations sur les avantages de la Vieillesse dans la Vie Chrétienne*, p. 314. Quoted by Digby.

widening with all their splendid theories about humanity and fraternity and equality, how is this gulf to be filled up or bridged over? By the hearts of true Christian women!

AN ILLUSTRATION OF TRUE WOMEN'S INFLUENCE.

Say not, then, what can women do? Travellers over our southern seas tell us of the manner in which a tiny little insect, called the coral insect, prevents the last traces of submerged continents from disappearing for ever beneath the waves. These worlds, sunk beneath the ocean surface long, long ages ago, left visible here and there only a few of the crests of their highest mountains, and by degrees even these were worn down by wind and rain and the ceaseless lashing of the waves. Just when the last summits had passed out of sight, God sent these armies of tiny creatures to labour together and build in the shallow waters which covered the sunken crests these beautiful structures called corals, with their marvellous forms and colours; generation after generation of these little toilers of the deep succeeded in doing what all the might and ingenuity of the race of man could never compass—they erected structures so solid that the rage of the mightiest storm could neither destroy nor shake them. Higher and higher they rose, till the tide left them bare, and other agencies then came to aid in making an island. Elsewhere existing islands are preserved from the destroying action of the ocean by these same little workers, which build their barriers or walls of coral all round to break the force of the waves, and save the islands with their inhabitants and lovely growth of vegetation.

If God accords such marvellous results to the united action of insects invisible almost to the naked eye, what blessings will He not bestow on mothers labouring within their homes to make husbands, children, servants, ay, and the neighbours all around, true children of the living God?

Do all the good you can to the souls God gives you to work upon: if you are a faithful labourer, He will surely give you more—and this number will go on increasing in proportion to your goodness and the charity burning within.

PRACTICAL RULES.

In this spirit you have only to see what are the simple rules taught by experience and which are to guide you in your conduct towards your servants. As in the case of your children, so here impress everyone in your service with the conviction that his or her single soul is as dear to you as if none other claimed your interest and your care. This personal interest in the welfare, the comfort, the progress of every individual in the household, works like a mighty spell. Nor, by kindly inquiring into the concerns of each, will their respect for you be diminished, if you are careful to be kind without being familiar. Servants like their masters to keep a proper distance. We have known the rudest, the most impertinent, and ungovernable, to be tamed and made respectful and well-mannered by this prudent mixture of kind motherly interest and reserve. It is necessary always to address one's servants with a simplicity which is far removed from

a proud, imperious tone, but implies a certain degree of regard for them; and still more necessary that they should never be permitted to address their master or mistress, or any member of the family, otherwise than respectfully.

Persons really well bred will never permit themselves either rudeness, haughtiness, or familiarity towards their dependents; and it very rarely happens that these show themselves disposed to be otherwise than respectful towards such masters.

We repeat it, then, take a real interest in each one of your servants.

ENCOURAGE THEM TO SEEK YOUR ADVICE IN DIFFICULTIES.

Remember how little of present joy or happiness such persons have outside of what your home affords them. They have had, very many of them, a hard lot in the past; their stay with you may decide of their whole future; they are all gifted with some share of affection, some of them, at least, with warm and deep affections; among these hearts there may be one that is sorely bruised, and which your motherly hand can soothe and heal. Your own womanly tact will not be slow in discovering such as need especial kindness, nay, very great delicacy of treatment. Let them be encouraged to come to you; and let them feel that their secret, whatever it be, is safe with you.

It not unfrequently happens that a certain moodiness or irritability which you perceive in servants otherwise excellent, arises from concealed grief. There may be a fearful struggle going on against

despair beneath that veil of sadness or that cloud of ill-temper. A single kind word from you—a word from your heart—will make these clouds dissolve in tears of sweet relief, and the whole soul will be laid bare before you.

DO NOT JUDGE THEM HASTILY.

Even where there is neglect of duty, be not hasty in condemning or punishing. You will, if still young, find out before you die that the harshest and most pitiless of mistresses, the quickest to think ill of the delinquent, to judge severely, and punish without mercy, is the woman who is most remiss in the fulfilment of her own sacred duties, and who stands most in need of the mercy of God and man.

When complaints are made, do not lend a willing ear, so as to encourage informers, nor hasten to act upon the information. Let all under you know that you never condemn before inquiring carefully, and that your inquiry is always conducted without noise or partiality.

SURROUND YOUR SERVANTS WITH OBJECTS WHICH CAN ELEVATE THEM.

The feeling of inferiority and dependence, and the nature of the services they render, are, in themselves, sufficient to humble persons who may be naturally proud, high-minded, or sensitive. Do not debase or degrade your servants still further by allotting them rooms to work and sleep in where all is discomfort and meanness. Our forefathers were wont, when the beggar asked for a night's lodging, to give him, in the name of Christ, a place at the common board, a seat near the warm hearth, and a clean and com-

fortable bed—all for his dear sake who for us "came unto his own, and his own received him not."

We have just seen that the servant in the Christian household is to be treated as a something holy and precious; do not, then, while you give warmth and comfort to the passing beggar, and while you lavish luxury and all honour on a guest, leave the servant who labours for your interest and who is one of your family, to what is as inhospitable as the cavern of Bethlehem, as cold and as comfortless and as unclean almost. For there are mistresses who care not how wretchedly furnished may be the miserable garret or cellar in which their servants pass the night, after a hard day's toil.

See you not that the very necessity of accepting such a resting-place is felt as a degradation? And everything which degrades is remembered as an unpardonable wrong. Let everything in their sleeping and working-rooms tend to elevate them; let there be both cleanliness and comfort; and let the walls be ornamented with such pictures and other simple decorations as may lift mind and heart above the sights and sounds of the street.

Insist on it that their food shall be wholesome and abundant, and that everything about the meal shall bespeak a motherly care for their health.

DO NOT OVERBURDEN THEM WITH WORK.

Just as persons who have no conscience are harsh and merciless in dealing with the weaknesses and faults of others, even so do persons who have never known what it is to work hard, or work at all, show themselves pitiless or most unreasonable in the

amount of labour they expect and exact from their servants. There are, unhappily, but too many masters and mistresses in all large communities, who have more than one trait of resemblance to Sampson and Sarah Brass. Such abominable meanness and hard-heartedness are not, however, consistent with any one Christian virtue in man or woman. Still there is in many households a carelessness and callousness as to the hardships, the diet, and comfort of servants, that result in like suffering to these, and create the same bitter hatred in the sufferers, and call down from a just God the same inevitable retribution.

Where servants are loved and cared for, they work lovingly and conscientiously for their masters, and repay with ample interest the generosity shown by these in providing for the health and comfort of their dependents.

IN SICKNESS CARE FOR THEM TENDERLY.

Do not send them out of the house when they are ill, unless the disease be a contagious one, and you have near at hand an hospital in which they are sure to be well cared for.

When the sickness has been contracted in serving you faithfully, this care on your part is simply an act of justice. In every case it is a duty imposed by charity; and where the soul of the sufferer needs more tender nursing than even the body, it is far more urgent that you should not give over to others the duty God wishes you to fulfil in person.

During many years of ministration to the sick we have had occasion to witness the unsparing devotion

of many mistresses to their sick servants. One instance, that of a generous Protestant lady, did not fall under our own observation, but was related to us by an eye-witness. She was the most distinguished personage in her native city, and her example may serve as an exhortation to many tepid and remiss Catholics.

One of her servants fell ill of a most malignant fever; the nature of the disease and the imminent danger to her large family were clearly pointed out by the physician. The lady, however, had no thought of sending the poor patient away; but made an hospital of one-half of her large mansion, isolating it as far as she could from the rest of the household, and shut herself up with the sufferer, an Irish Catholic girl. She would permit no one but the physician and the priest to enter, all that was needful to herself and her patient being left outside the apartment adjoining the sick-room. Night and day the courageous woman watched over her charge; but it was all in vain. The terrible fever claimed its victim.

The generous mistress bestowed on the dead the same loving care she had lavished on the living. She dressed the corpse in her own raiment, gave orders to have everything done as if the deceased were one of her daughters, had the body in its beautiful rosewood casket laid out in her best parlour, and invited all the friends and co-religionists of the dead girl to pay their respects to her remains. The funeral was a touching demonstration, attesting by the numbers of those present and by their quality that all appreciated this noble example of Christian charity.

Her daughters and granddaughters inherited together with this self-sacrificing spirit their parent's claim to a still higher grace.

We have quoted in the first part of this chapter the beautiful charity of two sisters to the woman who had wronged them so fearfully: and elsewhere* we glanced rapidly at the death-bed of a young martyr of charity. We have seen, in families blessed with parents who deemed the tender care of sick servants an ordinary but most sacred duty, what mother and children can do to make a sick-room delightful. There was no thought of expense, or fatigue, or fastidiousness. The best physicians in the city were in attendance, the most costly articles from the druggist, the grocer, or the market, the most generous wines when needed; and what was more than all that, a love and untiring care, inspired by true religion, was lavished on the patient even though he or she had only been a few days in the family.

Could it be a matter of surprise that servants living in such a house never could speak of their master or mistress but with tears of gratitude and expressions of heartfelt veneration?

KNOW HOW TO PRAISE YOUR SERVANTS.

This is only the application to your dependents of the rule given with respect to your husband and your children. It is a serious defect in a mistress not to know when and where and how to praise her servants. Praise, however, is a sweet reward, and most

* Page 147.

coveted, too, by those who labour conscientiously—a reward often more prized by affectionate and generous natures than the miserable compensation called wages; and it is a most powerful stimulant to the sluggish, the careless, and even the perverse. What transformations have we not seen in school-room and kitchen, and workshop and field, effected in natures hitherto rebellious to all stimulants, by the gentle words of praise bestowed by a wise master or a kind mistress!

We once more remind you that the judicious and generous bestowal of praise is a most beneficial and meritorious alms-giving. It is more than gold or silver to the receiver, and it never impoverishes the giver. Do not stint those who thirst for it. It will be more welcome to many a famished heart than a draught from the cool spring to foot-sore and fainting wayfarer. It will inspire good resolutions and give strength to execute them. It will be like the first steps of that divine ladder which the Patriarch saw reaching from earth to heaven; your kind words will raise the weak soul up one step, or two or three, thereby showing it that the ascent to higher goodness and virtue is not only possible but sweet. God's angels then will do the rest; and the God of angels from on high will look down and bless you for the help you have given to the faint-hearted.

CHAPTER XV.

THE IDEAL HOME.

WHEN wife and husband are what God wills them to be, one mind and one heart, having but one purpose in life—to be devoted to each other, walking hand-in-hand in the divine presence, seeking to know the divine will clearly in all things, and yearning to accomplish it perfectly, then their home cannot fail to be an ideal or perfect home, and their united work in life a perfect work; because it is as much God's work as their own.

In such a home, when all the ordinances left by Christ to his Church have sanctified it as well as the hearts of its master and mistress, the wife is most truly the embodiment of all natural and supernatural excellence designed to keep her companion faithful to God and the Truth.* We again recall the attention of all mothers to the exceeding care and reverence with which they should prepare their sons and daughters for the reception of the (to them) all-important sacrament of matrimony. In the world-wide

* Truth is defined by De Bonald as "the knowledge of beings and their relations." This is truth in our *mind*; but truth in our *life*, or truth in action, would be the fulfilment of all the duties imposed on us towards all beings—God, ourselves, and the neighbour.

warfare made at present on the Church and her most sacred institutions, not the least mischief is done by making of marriage a mere civil contract and lay ceremony. As we believe firmly in the perpetual union of Christ with his spouse the Church, so let us be faithful and fervent in profiting by these divine ordinances designed to hallow our homes, our hearts, our lives.

In treating of the qualities and virtues of a true wife, we did little more than point briefly to the fact of so many husbands being saved from ruin, temporal and eternal, by her agency who is the angel of the home. Presently we shall see how hard it is to achieve the redemption from inveterate vice of a soul so dear. But there stands the mighty lesson in all its divine meaning, that just as Mary the Mother of the New Life gave the Saviour and salvation to the world, just as the Church, the spouse of Christ, evermore performs the divine office of motherhood here below towards the nations, even so true woman in every home is the saviour and sanctifier of man.

Hence the mighty import of the duties assumed by the teaching orders of women in the modern world. Their schools are not merely a nursery from which their own numbers are recruited, but they are the nursery of the true Christian mothers who are to rear the priests as well as the citizens of the future.

Where husband and wife are united by the deepest of all natural affections—deepened still more, purified, and intensified by the great gift of the special sacramental grace—they set before themselves, like Christ and his Church, one mighty work to do, to make their home a paradise and their children saints.

And when we say "saints" we mean true men and true women, faithful, perfect, admirable in every possible relation of life.

Let every one of you, wives and mothers, who read these lines, pause here and say, whether or not she has seen such homes among the poorest day-labourers, among tradesmen and merchants, among the wealthy and the nobly born? Where there is living faith in the twin souls knit together by the sacrament, and that most blessed union of minds and hearts and wills, even poverty is sweet and hard toil is welcome, and husband and wife find in each other, every day that dawns on them, new qualities which delight and new virtues to increase their mutual love: each is to the other a continual exhortation to trust in God, to piety and uprightness, to the patience and energy which bear with unavoidable ills and aim at the possession of true good. There is happiness with a dry loaf, a warm fire, and the love which enables each to be all-in-all to the other; and there is wealth above all price in the contentment based on this mutual tenderness and on the all-sufficiency of the devoted husband to the wife, and of the devoted wife to her husband.

The home of the poorest man where such love is, and such goodness is known to all around, is most truly like a bright light in a dark place.

But where this union of hearts exists in the home of the wealthy and the great, the life-labour of husband and wife can be productive of incalculable good. Such people, with their ample means, their position, and their influence are, in truth, God's stewards in high places, with an arduous mission before them;

but who can describe the reward kept in store for their fidelity?

AIM AT MAKING THE IDEAL HOME AN HEREDITARY HOME.

This is the last suggestion which we make to those who have succeeded in rising to affluence. In the days of our forefathers it was the ambition of every high-souled man, whether born in poverty or in a palace, to create a home for himself and his children after him, or to preserve and adorn the home of his parents.

To every father and mother whom our voice can reach, we say: Make your home so happy, so honoured, so hospitable, and so substantial that your children shall vie with each other as to who can possess it, keep it, and transmit it more honoured still and more substantial to their dearest. Love to have your married children settle near you; encourage and help them to build homes like your own. Give them to understand, by your advice and example, that the fortune which they may make in their turn is not to be spent by the possessor in mere personal enjoyment, but laid up for his children and the poor and God's Church, in their need.

> "This small inheritance my father left me
> Contenteth me, and is worth a monarchy.
> I seek not to wax great by others' waning,
> Or gather wealth, I care not with what envy;
> Sufficeth that I have maintains my state,
> And sends the poor well pleased from my gate."*

This spirit is not that which animates in our day

* Shakespeare, "Henry VI., part ii., act iv., scene 8."

nations and individuals. The universal tendency is to make the most of the present, and to let those who come after us take care of themselves. Families in the olden time, even those of farmers and tradesmen, were most ambitious to leave a home and a name after them, the home and the name they had received from their fathers. Men of all classes resembled the banian or sacred tree of India, which sends down from its lower branches air-roots into the earth. These in their turn grow up to be strong props, supporting the horizontal branches and remaining connected with the parent trunk. Thus does the latter multiply itself till it covers many an acre of land, and affords shelter to thousands.

But fathers among us care little about founding a house; nor do their sons preserve any lasting affection for the home in which they were born. Families nowadays resemble the solitary trees left behind by the settler when axe and fire have swept away the forest from around his abode. They pine alone, graceful and stately it may be, amid the waste, but they leave no descendants behind them.

"There is nothing more expensive and injurious," says a wise author, "than changing one's residence. Things are lost and broken. It has an influence even on the mind; ideas are discomposed and troubled, and some time must elapse before they resume their wonted order. I wish that all who are mine should lodge under the same roof, warm themselves at the same hearth, and sit at the same table. The united family obtains more consideration than if it was dispersed. If divided and less numerous, it will never

arrive at the same esteem, authority, and importance." *

Let fathers and mothers forgive these earnest wishes we form for seeing their homes ideal homes, most blessed homes; for seeing them also substantial and permanent homes, not like tents set up for the night and struck with the next dawn, but homes that will continue to be loved and revered by many a generation of noble Christian men and women, to whom every stone shall "represent the ancient honour and venerated virtue of the family," and the dwelling itself shall be "the heart of loyalty and the sanctuary of honour."

Such it can and will be with the cordial co-operation of a husband possessed of manly spirit, devotion to his wife, and a conscientious desire of fulfilling the divine will. Fathers, whoever you are, let it be your purpose to make your home such that every son of yours in passing it would uncover his head and almost bend his knee, as if it were the temple of the living God, and honoured with the presence of his veiled majesty. †

OBSTACLES TO THE WIFE'S GOOD GOVERNMENT.

If the home is what it ought to be, what God intends it should be, its mistress and sovereign is so not only by the nature of things, but by the supremacy of her own goodness, and the free and loving homage of her husband. He is to be, throughout

* Angelo Pandolfini, *Governo della Famiglia.*

† "Groenveld on his way to execution, when passing by his father's house, bent his knees, looking towards it, and then courageously met his death."—DIGBY.

his whole life, the first servant of her he has made queen over his household and his heart.

What happens, when, instead of this loving service done to his wife, instead of being her willing and docile instrument in furthering the happiness of all subject to them, instead of co-operating with her in the divine work of educating and elevating both children and servants, he becomes her chief obstacle, the ever-present and insuperable difficulty which no one can remove from her path?

We do not wish to cast a shadow on the spirit of the reader by dwelling for one moment on the extreme cases—alas! all too frequent among us—of habitual intemperance, or unfaithfulness in husbands, bound by the obligations inherent to their state to be models of virtue and the guardians of the sacred honour of their homes.

The wife whose heart is not broken, whose life is not shortened, and whose spirit is not utterly prostrated on discovering her companion to be the slave of intemperance, his affections to be given to another, or his soul to be a loathsome moral ulcer, must be sustained by the hand of God. We have shown one example of such a sad lot in a preceding chapter; * but how many young wives possess the angelic piety and heroic fortitude of Portugal's most lovely flower of sanctity?

There are some, however;—there are, we doubt, many more than we suspect. God knows how to feed the springs of nobleness and spiritual life in the souls most dear to Him, in those especially who seek

* Chapter VII., pp. 106 and following.

to make of their cross their crown." In the very homes where the drunkard's beastly life would seem to kill every germ of happiness in the hearts of wife and children, and to blight every promise and prospect of future prosperity, faith and love will continue to live within the soul of a gentle woman, and hope to survive all the crushing disappointments of the past.

In the frightful cold of the highest latitudes ever yet reached by man, even beneath the ice and the snow which the sun of last year and many preceding suns had failed to melt, our heroic travellers have discovered, on digging deep to the soil, the beautiful heath called *Andromeda*, still living and awaiting a future spring. The hardy little thing has its own internal heat, and thaws the first soft snow which covers it, forming thus a kind of dome or roof of ice above itself; and there it lives on secure, with the buds of its pretty flowers in their sheaths, ready to expand when the long winter is over, and the first rays of sunshine fall upon its bed.

And are not immortal souls more a care to the Father of all than the heath flower of the extreme north, or the queenliest blossom that blows among the wild luxuriance of the Brazilian forest? So brave hearts, in your desolated homes, over which have settled the darkness and the cold of more than the longest arctic winter, be sure that God the life-giver is with you, and that his warmth, who is the sun of all comfort, will visit you in good season.

OBSTACLES IN THE WEALTHY HOME.

Apart from the extreme case of habitual intemperance, and such destroying vices as we have just

mentioned, the wealthy wife may have to contend with other difficulties. Her husband, though neither dissipated nor intemperate, may be entirely out of sympathy with her best and most cherished designs for the education of her children and the government of her household, as well as for all her most legitimate works of outdoor charity and zeal. Thus, especially in the great labour of educating her children, there will be a want of sympathy in what a true woman holds to be most dear and sacred. It is a sad trial.

But if most women are discourged by this lack of sympathy, or of efficient co-operation on the part of their husbands, there are others, and they are not so very rare, who have derived fresh courage and energy from their husbands' apathy, doubling their efforts to secure to their dear ones the highest culture of mind and heart, and employing a God-inspired industry and perseverance to interest the father in the intellectual and spiritual advancement of his children.

A woman of genuine piety will, like St. Monica, know what virtue there is in fervent prayer and tears poured out before the divine majesty in favour of the callous soul. As in the case of Augustine, so in the case of the worst husbands, we should say to the mourner, "It is impossible that the son of such tearful prayers should perish!" But there are other remedies which God wonderfully blesses. Not only must you make your children pray with you and tell them that they are praying for their parent; you should also stimulate them in their studies and their progress in all goodness by the thought of thereby making their father happy.

Get up in his honour little family festivals, with recitations, music, and other like amusements; interest the entire household in these entertainments, with such of his friends as he would wish to see pleased. It is rare that the most indifferent and unsympathetic remains uninterested or unmoved by such exhibitions as these. We merely suggest. We have seen the experiment succeed so marvellously that we deem it worth while to counsel a renewal of it.

There is worse than want of sympathy, however, there is interference with the mother's plans and methods in rearing her children, or in caring for the instruction and comfort of her servants. This is a great hardship. But what is to be done?

Not to lose heart; to do as much of one's duty as circumstances permit; to go on from day to day giving to the young plants under one's care as much attention and culture as is possible, and to trust in the divine assistance for a change, sooner or later.

Besides, does not the homely truth of the old favourite ballad, "Love will find out the way," apply to such cases as this most unreasonable opposition from one's husband? Will not the love which survives in a true woman's heart for the man she once loved best of all the world, prompt some one way to bring him to her way of thinking? And even should that wifely love be dead, dead, will not the mother's love "find out the way" of overcoming the obstacle? Again we remind mothers so circumstanced that He whose work they are trying to do binds himself to aid them, and will surely lend his assistance to their strenuous and persevering efforts. Monica converted her pagan husband, as well as his mother; it

was a hard struggle with a weak soul utterly steeped in heathen vices and self-indulgence; and she ended by winning her son to God—a still harder conquest; for in the case of Augustine there was the pride of intellect to overcome as well as the terrible power of human respect and a life of more refined indulgence as yet in its prime.

How can you tell what your children may be in God's designs?

In this case, of Augustine's father, Patricius, we have touched upon the terrible obstacle offered to the mother's teaching and moral training by the evil examples of a father. We cannot do better than recommend, to mothers circumstanced as Monica was, he lesson of her life and examples. Let us listen to one page of Augustine's "Confessions," * as if we paused for a few minutes on a toilsome and steep path, to look down on a lovely vale, and breathe deliciously the mingled fragrance borne upwards to us by the summer air:

"Being modestly and soberly trained, and rather made subject by Thee to her parents, than by her parents to Thee, when she had arrived at a marriageable age she was given a husband whom she served as her lord. And she busied herself to gain him to Thee, preaching Thee unto him by her behaviour; by which Thou madest her fair, and reverently amiable, and admirable unto her husband. . . . For she waited for thy mercy upon him that by believing in Thee he might become chaste. And besides this, as he was earnest in friendship, so was

* "Confessions," B. IX., c. ix., Pilkington's translation.

he violent in anger; but she had learned that an angry husband should not be resisted, neither in deed nor even in word. But so soon as he was grown calm, she would give him a reason for her conduct should he have been excited without cause.

"In short, while many matrons whose husbands were more gentle, carried the marks of blows on their dishonoured faces, and would, in private conversation, blame the lives of their husbands, she would blame *their* tongues. . . . And when they, knowing what a furious husband she had to endure, marvelled that it had never been reported, nor appeared by any indication, that Patricius had beaten his wife, or that there had been any domestic strife between them, even for a day, and asked her in confidence the reason of this, she taught them her rule, which I have mentioned above. They who observed it experienced the wisdom of it, and rejoiced; those who observed it not were kept in subjection, and suffered. . . . Such a one was she, Thou, her most intimate instructor, teaching her in the school of her heart. . . . She was also the servant of thy servants. Whosoever of them knew her, did in her much magnify, honour, and love Thee; for that through the testimony of the fruits of a holy conversation (life), they perceived Thee to be present in her heart; for she had 'been the wife of one man,' had requited her parents, had guided her house piously, had brought up children, bringing them forth anew as often as she saw them swerving from Thee. Lastly, to all of us, O Lord, . . . who, before she slept in Thee, lived associated together, having received the grace of thy baptism,

did she devote care such as she might, if she had been the mother of us all, served us as if she had been child of all."

Wives and mothers who bear the double cross laid on Monica, must imitate her faithfully, remembering, each of them, that she, too, has in the Spirit ever dwelling in a faithful soul "a most intimate Instructor, teaching her in the school of her heart."

Go not abroad to neighbours, or even dearest friend, to tell the story of your grievances against your husband, but follow the promptings of that Divine Teacher within, bidding you suffer, be patient, pray, labour, and wait, doing meanwhile quietly among the poor all the good you can, that they also may lift up their hands in prayer for you.

OBSTACLES IN THE POOR HOME.

Whatever hardship a wealthy mother may find in doing a true woman's work within her home, she has not the fear of poverty or starvation to contend with. That is the fearful lot of the poor woman cursed with an intemperate or idle husband, or burdened with an inefficient or infirm one.

Where intemperance consumes in the home all the fruits of a husband's labour, or where idleness sits at the scanty board, and eats up the bread which the wife's hard toil has to earn for her dear ones and herself, how heavy the heart must grow with the care of the morrow! How weak the hands must feel in doing the work which cannot keep fire enough on the hearth, or bread enough on the board! And where is the leisure for teaching the children, all too

poorly fed, and too barely clad to be sent to school? And if the overtaxed mother should find heart and leisure to instruct the little ones that multiply and grow up around her cheerless hearthstone, even should her own examples be most angelic, can they be efficacious to counteract the words, the deeds, the profane and blasphemous language, the violent and brutal conduct of a father who is either always intoxicated, or always suffering from the irritability and half-frenzy consequent upon habitual intoxication?

Oh! if there were religious orders of men and women whose exclusive vocation it would be to go to the succour of such mothers as these—and they are so numerous! they would yearly save millions, who are willing to be saved, but who must be lost without some interference of heaven-sent charity.

Of all the most deserving—so often the most heroic—members of their flocks, none more than these mothers appeal to the priestly zeal of our devoted pastors. Our voice can scarcely reach these brave souls fainting on the road beneath their intolerable burden, or it can only come to them through the generous hearts this page may move with pity for Christ's dearest ones. May He speak to every one of you, and impel you to aid where to aid is the divinest mercy!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE MISTRESS OF THE HOME AND HER SOCIAL DUTIES.

THE words "society" and "social duties," as they are to be understood here, have received, from the real follies and criminal vanities of worldly-minded women, an odious meaning, which must be at once corrected ere we can enter on an explanation of the noble part which a Christian woman has to play in the social circle to which she is born, and to which she is bound by so many duties and charities.

The word "society," as understood by the world of fashion and vanity, means simply assemblages of the wealthy, the worldly, and the dissipated, into which women go to be admired and sought after; where the great purpose of life is to display one's self to the best advantage, to outshine one's neighbours, and to decry them by a thousand arts. Women who have never gone into such society but to shine in this way, and who rear their daughters with the same notions of social life, and introduce them to "Vanity Fair" for the same purpose of dazzling and outstripping all competitors in the race of extravagance, will teach their children, as they have taught themselves, that their sole duty in life is so to dress and to charm in these gatherings that they shall become resistless. These are the persons

who have given an odious and almost criminal sense to the terms "society" and "social duties."

And not without great reason. For such women, there is no true home, with its sacred duties and God-like virtues, with its serious labour of self-culture and spiritual advancement, followed by the sweet repose and delightful amusements of the family circle. There is no home-life for these votaries of vanity. Home for them only means the retirement in which they rest between one round of dissipation and another, and in which, when they have slept a part of their weariness away, they wearily prepare for the next social meeting. The husbands of such women are only looked up to as the prime ministers of their pleasures, as a happy convenience for providing the moneys necessary to their unlimited extravagance.

The care and regulation of a household, the education of children, when they elect to be burdened with any, the improvement or comfort of their servants, or the needs of the poor who knock at their gate, are to these weary ones an intolerable nuisance. Vanity—Self, rather, under another name—is the only deity these heartless ones worship, and pleasure is the sole end of their miserable existence. But let them view the deformity of their own lives, and the certain ruin of body and soul towards which they are hurrying, by the contrast presented by the life of a true Christian woman of the world, by her notions about society and social duty, and her conscientious discharge of the obligations imposed by her position.

THE "WOMAN OF THE WORLD" AND THE "WORLDLY WOMAN."

Truth is like the broad light of day, in which the eye sees the reality of things. In that light let us behold what is the difference between a woman of the world, in the fair and obvious sense of the words, that is, a true Christian woman living in the world, discharging faithfully every known duty, and a "worldly woman" who lives for self, for human opinion, and mere enjoyment. We have already seen the dark side of the picture, let us now see the bright.

Most women have to live in the world. It is the sphere of their labours, often heroic, beneficial to everybody around them, and glorious to God and his Church. St. Monica lived all her life in the world, and discharged most admirably all the duties of daughter, wife, mother, mistress of a household, a member of the sorely-tried Church in her day, and of the more than half pagan society around her. So was it with many others of her contemporaries in the East and West: St. Macrina, the grandmother of St. Basil the Great, and St. Emmelia, his mother, were women of the world, living together in the same house, and together labouring to rear the sons of the latter, three of whom have been revered as saints by all succeeding Christian ages. Near them, in their native province, lived another family of saints, that of St. Nonna, the mother of St. Gregory Nazianzen, who also converted and made a saint of her husband. Nor were such women and their families by any means so rare as one might be led to think. In

Africa, we have at the same time the glorious defender of Catholic doctrine, St. Athanasius, whose mother declared that "it was her intention to devote her life to making of this, her only child, a true servant of the Church." She alone educated him, trained him in learning and goodness, till she made of him the wonder of his age. Under this most wise and loving guide the boy became an apostle, even before he had ceased to be a boy. For even then he was wont to assemble the pagan children of his own age, in his home or in the street, instructing them in the Christian faith, and when he had given them the desire of being baptised, baptising them with his own hand.

And this man, become the bishop of his native city, Alexandria, having experienced the powerful influence of a true Christian woman in his own early formation, employed the Christian women of his church as the most zealous apostles of the truth, and the most eloquent denouncers of Arianism.

We have already mentioned Anthusa, the illustrious mother of St. John Chrysostom, who lived and died a woman of the world, without ceasing to be a model of virtue. History has also preserved the names of many of the saintly women who helped John, when raised to the perilous episcopal chair of Constantinople, to combat the vices of the court, to stem the torrent of extravagance, luxury, and corruption which swept over the new capital and the surrounding provinces. At the head of these virtuous and most noble ladies stands St. Olympias, and among them may be mentioned St. Pentalia, St. Sylvia, Percuta, Sabiniana, Bassiana, Chalcidia, Asyncritia,

and St. Nicareda, of the highest nobility of Nicomedia, the mother of the sick and the poor, who lived and died in her own house, shedding around her on every side the hallowing influences of her spotless life, and her most generous charities.

In the West, Italy offered a like spectacle of womanly holiness and zeal. Rome beheld the great St. Jerome literally enlisting the patrician ladies into the service of the poor and the infirm, or into the ranks of the monastic life. One has only to remember such names as St. Paula, and her daughter, St. Eustochium, and forthwith a galaxy of glorious Christian women arise before the mind's eye, who made of the Rome of the fourth century the worthy parent of the Christian Rome of the nineteenth, before it became the prey of Piedmontese infidelity and unblushing corruption.

Further to the west and the north we meet with St. Ambrose, the spiritual parent of Augustine. Ambrose, the great magistrate, who became a great archbishop and teacher, owed also his education and holy training to his mother. His father, who was governor of all Gaul, and a great part of Germany, died while Ambrose was in his infancy. The mother, left with three children, succeeded in making saints of every one of them; Marcellina, her only daughter, being afterwards of immense utility to her great brother in spreading the reign of Christian piety, and the practical knowledge of the higher life in Milan and its vicinity.

In the next generation the family of St. Gregory the Great, as well as that of St. Paulinus of Nola, may be quoted as illustrious instances of the heroic

Christian spirit sanctifying all the spheres of active life in the world, as distinguished from the life of the cloister.

NEED OF TRUE CHRISTIAN WOMEN IN THE WORLD.

Indeed, it is the homes created by such women as Macrina, Emmelia, Nonna, Paula, and Monica, which become the fruitful nurseries of the men and women who make the priesthood venerable, and monastic life flourishing and fervent, while blessing at the same time the world itself with the sweet active virtues characteristic of Christianity. Mothers who fulfil, beneath the eye of God, and with a full sense of their responsibility, the duties of motherhood, will rear the very men God needs from whom to choose both the apostolic priest, and the model Christian gentleman and statesman; they will also form to their own image and likeness the maidens whom the Divine Spirit will as surely direct to follow the Lamb in the paths of his apostleship, or to remain behind to create and sanctify homes of their own.

But the mothers who rear such sons and daughters, and such of these daughters as God wills to remain in the secular life to perpetuate the precious virtues learned from their parent, have other duties besides the education of children, the happiness of a husband, the economy of a household. The wife of the labourer or the mechanic has duties towards the neighbour, duties towards the Church, duties towards the various institutions of education and beneficence in which every family and every individual in the community are interested.

But this is much more true of the wife of the

wealthy man, of the magistrate, the legislator, of the large proprietor, the nobleman, and the prince. Besides their most important and most onerous household obligations, these women have others which they cannot dispense with, and which, properly and conscientiously fulfilled, are most conducive to the interests of religion, as well as to the benefit of the community at large.

IMPORTANCE OF A CHRISTIAN WOMAN'S SOCIAL DUTIES.

Treating as we are of the duties of women in the world—of women of all classes—it, surely, will not be denied that the wives and daughters of sovereigns, of chief magistrates under any form of government, and those of public functionaries of all degrees, are bound to receive and entertain, to appear in public on certain occasions, to accept invitations to certain social gatherings. This is, this has ever been, and is likely ever to be, considered a real and most important duty, inherent to the position filled by all such persons.

In our own age—not to seek examples too far off—we all have known or read of women, at once most exalted in rank and most exalted in virtue, who felt themselves bound to honour their position by showing a courtly grace in every circle in which duty compelled them to be the central figures, by dispensing a right royal or princely hospitality on every occasion—indeed, on every day of their lives;—who knew on these very days, early or late, to visit our Lord, in the persons of the needy and sick. In the queen, the princess, the noble lady, of whatever

rank, in the gentlewoman, the merchant or the mechanic's wife, the Spirit of God will be sure to manifest his presence by the light on the features or in the eye, by the words dropped in conversation in the reception-room, at table, or even in the strictest privacy.

Every one knows—even France, which upset the throne of the husband, has not forgotten the angelic virtues and noble charities of the wife and her daughters—how the late Queen of the French, Marie Amélie, was the light of Louis Philippe's court, and "the providence" (as they were wont to call her) of the poor, far and near. There never was one word of scandal uttered about the royal circle. She was a devoted and worshipped wife; and the sons she has left behind show by their lives how well she discharged her motherly duties. But her daughters reflected in an especial manner the virtues of their admirable parent. One, above all the others, walked closely in her mother's footsteps—Louise, Queen of the Belgians, whose memory to this day is venerated in every Christian home in the land. Such women were worthy of the blood of St. Louis.

Not less admirable were the princesses of the royal houses of Savoy, Bavaria, and Austria. More than one of them are at this moment candidates for the honours of canonisation. What though the king who disgraces, in the Quirinal, his line, his faith, and his station, should be the son of a saintly mother—Solomon was the son of David, and Roboam was worse than Solomon. The virtues which adorned so many princes of the ancient house of Savoy reappear in the prince who resigned the

crown of Spain, and is now content, like another of his near ancestors,* to become, after his young wife's death, the humble member of a religious order.

No one who has approached the ladies who grace the thrones of Austria, Bavaria, Belgium, and Portugal, or who are the companions in exile, and in private station, of the royal families of France and Naples, but are as cordial as they are unanimous in praising in them the courtly graces which lend a lustre to their exalted rank, and the unaffected piety which adorns their private life. Wherever they are, the poor, far and wide, soon learn to bless them.

CATHOLIC LADIES EVERYWHERE TRUE CHRISTIANS AS WELL AS WOMEN OF THE WORLD.

Our American travellers, who have spent a single season in London, must have been struck by the multiplicity of good works to which English, Irish, and Scotch Catholic ladies of high rank, residing there, devote themselves. Indeed, one has only to glance over the notices in the London *Tablet*, or *Weekly Register*, to see how active they are in promoting public charities of every kind. And yet only a few of these appear on the surface; the greater number, the most costly to the noble patronesses or founders, are carried on quietly, far away from the public eye. One of these noble women, Cecilia, Marchioness of Lothian, died in Rome during the month of June. It is only since her sudden and lamented death that most men have heard of her unlimited generosity and indefatigable zeal in providing for the manifold

* Charles Emmanuel II. died a Jesuit lay-brother.

needs of the London poor. But Scotland had also most touching stories to tell of that charity which could not help giving, but loved to give in secret, like the life-giving warmth of the sun, which works through the long hours of the spring and summer and autumn, long after the great luminary has withdrawn his light. Another, no less noble and no less devoted, was with Lady Lothian when God gave her rest in the City of the Holy Apostles; of her numberless charities England, as well as her native Ireland, could tell many a thrilling tale. But she is still among the living; and so is another, of world-wide fame as a writer, as good as she is noble—a passionate lover of poverty, devoting to the poor not only the proceeds of her literary labours, but everything she can spare from her necessary household expenses. And these are only three among thousands, on both sides of the Channel, who do not think they can dispense themselves from complying with the duties of their social position, while being most exemplary in the accomplishment of every obligation of family life.

HOW CHARITY AND RELIGION ARE PROMOTED BY SOCIAL GATHERINGS.

One thing is certain—that where mothers have been careful to educate their sons and daughters in the elevating and refining atmosphere of "the gentle life," which is born of enlightened piety, they cannot fail, in a Republican country, to be welcome guests in every circle. Where a man of good standing and education shows himself to be truly "the

scholar and the gentleman," there is no circle into which he may not be admitted; and where his sisters have all the solid and graceful accomplishments of the true gentle life we have been sketching under so many forms, there is no circle which they cannot ornament, shining wherever they appear with a light which will hurt the eyes of none, while it serves to diffuse the influence of genuine goodness and gentleness.

Every true Christian mother who has had herself experience of the power of such goodness and gentleness in an accomplished woman, will deem it her duty to prepare her sons and daughters for their appearance in society. If her home-life, her home-education and amusements have been in conformity with the rules laid down here and there in the preceding chapters, their "coming out," as it is phrased, will be no sudden and abrupt transition from obscurity into dazzling light, or from simple, homely manners to the strange stateliness and ceremonial of a superior world.

As these remarks are addressed, principally at least, to educated women of position, whose sons and daughters are supposed to display in their daily home-circles the accomplishments of music and song, there will be for them but little of novelty and no strangeness in their displaying their best powers for the delight of the first great company assembled in their own honour, or for the amusement of any circle, even the most brilliant and cultivated, in which they may subsequently appear.

The piety they have drunk in with their mother's milk will be a sure preventive against the foolish

vanity which troubles some light brains. Where singing, playing, and all the conversational arts are an everyday exercise in good families, and in presence of guests who are good judges of proficiency, there is as little ground for vanity in the display as there is of novelty. What is done habitually is soon done unconsciously, and with the naturalness arising from habit come that ease and grace which are the great charm of those whose home has ever been for them the school of "the gentle life."

Of course, while an experienced and thoughtful mother is thus training her sons and daughters within her own home-sanctuary, she is fully aware of the importance of the social duties for which such training so admirably prepares them; but she is also most careful that they shall not know that their education is directed towards any such purpose. If this long home preparation be carried on beneath the eye of God, with a final view to his honour, by making his religion lovely in the person of its professors, and by thus drawing to the truth souls for whom Christ died, will this not be the highest charity, and will not religion win the only triumph aimed at both by the pious mother and her worthy children? And, in very truth, how many souls, among the best, the purest, the most gifted, have been gained in the past, and are still daily won to God, by the unconscious charm of an accomplished but innocent young man or woman.

So long, therefore, as society exists, the charities of neighbourly intercourse must be a duty incumbent on all, and, above all, on the professors of the true religion; for true religion there cannot be without

true charity—active, practical, and aiming at the highest good of others. Neighbourly intercourse means for each mistress of a home that she will exert herself to make it a centre of attraction for all who can benefit her children and herself, or who can be benefited by them, and that her visitors shall go away delighted, to return again and again. It also means that she and her children will, in their turn, grace the family circles of these same friends and neighbours.

The influence of the Christian mother's home-circles, and the very charm which she and such as she exert in the social gatherings where they appear, are the only possible and the most powerful corrective to the corrupting influence of that world so well denominated "Vanity Fair."

WORK OF THE WOMAN OF THE WORLD OUTSIDE OF HER HOME.

With all these the woman of the world has to become acquainted; an interest in them is as much her own interest as the education of her children or the well-being of her household. Who does not know that in France the magnificent Society of the Propagation of the Faith, with the millions raised annually, penny by penny, from poor and rich alike, with the fruitful missions founded and sustained in both hemispheres—on every point of the English-speaking world, as well as among the heathen—is mainly the work of French women? And so is the "Association of the Holy Infancy," founded by the chivalrous De Forbin-Janson, Bishop of Nancy, and which

yearly rescues from death so many heathen infants in China, and provides for their education. These are only two of the great works carried on in France by women of the world. Their sisters in Canada do not belie this well-earned reputation. One has only to live a single week in Quebec or Montreal to feel that the heart of woman there is ever open to all the noblest impulses of charity, her head quick to conceive generous plans, her tongue ever ready to plead them, and her hand well practised in working for every form of distress.

PART OF THE WORKING MAN'S WIFE.

But have we not, it may be suggested, left the woman of the labouring classes a very unimportant part to play in social life, and in the discharge of what we have termed "social duties?"

By no means. The advice so frequently given, and the rules addressed to women of these classes in the preceding chapters will teach them how to make of their own homes so many schools of "the Gentle Life," of their sons and daughters apt and accomplished scholars in the true courtesies and graces of society; how to make their evenings at home most delightful, entertaining, elevating, and refining to their own as well as to the guests attracted to their fireside by this twofold charm of refinement and bright cheerfulness. The pleasures —pure, heartfelt, ever fresh and welcome—which the good wife of the labouring man is as careful to provide each evening for her dear ones as she is to prepare them a wholesome and plentiful meal, will

encourage others of her neighbours and acquaintances to follow her example. And thus there will be other firesides regulated in all things on her own pattern, which will be a safe and welcome place of enjoyment for herself and her children. To such alone ought she and they to go.

Are such homes as these very rare among our people? No; thanks to God's fatherly care over them; and all due praise be to the wisdom and piety of so many true women well known to their religious guides, and better known still to all of their own class who love true goodness.

HOW THE GOOD ARE DRAWN TOGETHER.

For there is an occult freemasonry among the good, among those who truly live as becomes children of God, just as there is among worldlings. They find each other out in a neighbourhood; they are drawn to each other in a crowd; their lives seem to be governed by the laws of a "supernatural selection," which unconsciously and irresistibly throws them together. Have the good angels anything to do with this? Most certainly.

Cast a handful of gold dust into a vessel full of coarse sand, and shake it. If presently you seek for the shining speckles of the precious metal, you find them not: they have sunk to the bottom, and there they cluster together. Nay, place the vessel in some place where it may be heated slowly, without melting the golden particles, and after a time the mysterious laws of affinity will draw them together, separating them from the earthy mass, and impel-

ıg them downward, away from the surface. Again, ıtch a flower garden in springtide, when your ants are in full blossom; you will not find the bee ıd the wasp sucking the same flower. The bee ·ks the honey to bear it home to the hive, fasting ·ıd toiling herself the while; she is thinking of ·hers while she is abroad and seeking the loveliest ıd most fragrant daughters of the spring, and she ıstens homeward, laden with her treasures, only to ›ard them up for her sisters during the long winter ›onths. On the contrary, the wasp seeks the honey › enjoy it. Unselfish, unworldly, and motherly wo-ıen are like the bees: they go abroad to make ·›ney for their dear ones, not for the purpose of ratifying their appetite, like the wasp, or of dis-laying their beautiful wings, like the butterfly; ıd God gives them the instinct of knowing each ·her and trooping together, while they work with ıe accord and untiringly, as long as the day lasts, ·· treasure up sweet stores of enjoyment for others. ·asps, like selfish and pleasure-seeking people, ›o know each other; but they do not work well ›gether—they quarrel and sting each other to ıth, or victimise some innocent, harmless bee, ·ıcause it incautiously seeks the same flowering ırub with themselves.

Even so will true-hearted women, guided by the ıivine instinct within them, seek each other's society › ·ncourage each other in living godly lives, to ırn how they can improve their methods of edu-·ing their dear ones and of brightening their ··nes, as well as to plan means for relieving the ›or, for providing for the needs of a church in

debt, or of saving from want, temptation, and ruin the youthful and destitute of their own sex.

Oh, blessed shall be the day when in this great city of New York, we shall see such women as these forming associations for the purpose of protecting innocent and inexperienced girls arriving on our shores from the many snares set for them by fiends of their own sex, and by men who can never have known a mother. There has always existed in Catholic Italy associations of this sort, which provided asylums for the homeless and unprotected, where they could learn trades, and work for their own benefit till they found a suitable match; then the association added to the little store laid up by the bride, and thus secured her a handsome marriage portion. Moreover, it has been the immemorial custom for sovereigns, for Popes, for noble ladies of every degree to bestow yearly, on certain feast days, a dower on a number of poor but portionless girls. This was often done by noble ladies on the day of their own bridals, or on some such joyous occasion, or in thanksgiving for some great favour from on high.

We dare not make a suggestion. These lines may inspire some generous, womanly heart with a noble emulation of the charities of other lands.

In our own there are surely souls ready to respond to every breath of the divine inspiration. For we have in our midst women of the world, who seem to have no other occupation but that of benefiting others; women who give up every pleasure to open homes for the young and houseless of their own sex. What though their labours do not always prosper

as they wish, or though men do not praise or befriend their efforts, is He for whom they work blind or forgetful or ungrateful?

Generous women, whoever you be, forget not that you labour for the Eternal God, and that your reward is not to be enjoyed on this side of eternity. To all of you, being what you are, we would fain commend these lines on "Hoarded Joys," should you be tempted to repine at the slowness with which either success or repose cometh for you:—

> "I said: 'Nay, pluck not; let the first fruit be
> Even as thou sayest, it is sweet and red;
> But let it ripen still. The tree's bent head
> Sees in the stream its own fecundity,
> And bides the day of fulness. Shall not we
> At the sun's hour that day possess the shade,
> And claim our fruit before its ripeness fade,
> And eat it from the branch, and praise the tree?'"

But to the worldly women, who, born of Christian mothers and reared to the knowledge and practice of better things, allow the spring and summer of life to pass away without a single flower or fruit of ripened goodness for themselves or others, what shall we say? They have resolved, and resolved, and resolved, and not one resolution has ever ripened into performance. Their virtues are like the fruits buried long centuries ago in the royal sepulchres of Egypt: they fall to dust on being brought to the sunlight.

CHAPTER XVII.

GIRLHOOD OF THE VIRGIN MOTHER THE MODEL OF MAIDENHOOD.

THE virtues and qualities which the poet attributes to MARY in her girlhood are those which every Christian mother will endeavour to develop in her daughters—the deep-seated piety that makes conformity to the divine will the first and last study of every hour and day and year, till the veil is removed, and the dutiful soul beholds face to face Him who through all eternity will study to fulfil her will; the "profound simplicity of intellect," which is but the illumined eye of faith beholding God first and last and middlemost in all this wondrous world, and in the complicated course of human history; the "supreme patience" which springs from the certain hope that such faith begets, and makes the trials of time seem as nought compared with the eternal possession already begun in faith; these twin virtues of Faith and Hope, like the wings of the soul, lifting the maiden to the divine bosom even "from her mother's knee;" that "wisdom in charity" which consists in filling the heart brimful with the chaste love of the Supreme Good, in order to pour all the

unselfish devotion it inspires on the home first, and then on all outside the home, according to the enlightened laws of charity; the invincible fortitude that nerves the soul to struggle unceasingly against the warring desires of earthly concupiscence, while bearing with unruffled serenity the ills which befall, no matter whence they come; and that "circumspect pity" which makes the soul careful, while succouring the distress of others, and showing divinest pity to their most loathsome ills, not to be herself defiled, just as when mercy leads one to plunge into a roaring flood to save a poor drowning wretch, one takes care not to be swept away by the swift waters.

With all this strength of soul the Christian maiden must be near the maternal bosom and beneath the sweet light of a mother's love, like a lily within the close of some august sanctuary, watered daily by angelic hands, and growing up in gentleness and the perfection of all loveliness.

MARY'S PUBLIC LIFE THE MODEL OF WOMANHOOD'S TRIALS.

This gentle nurture within the home will give a girl's soul that adamantine firmness as well as purity which will bear without injury the terrible trials of after life. Maidenhood had scarcely begun for the Most Blessed One when the divine purpose was unfolded to her, and her share in the Work of Ages * was foreshown, the bitter road from the manger to

* Habacuc, iii. 2.

the cross; and then the long stay on earth after Him in the house of John, with her full participation in all the manifold woes of the infant Church. She who was the Mother of the Bridegroom, who had pillowed his infant head on her bosom through the long journeying, back and forth, of his exile, and who, at the foot of the cross, received on that same agonised bosom the dear thorn-crowned head taken down from the wood, was predestined to watch over the birth and growth of his Bride and our Mother.

As she suffered in Him when scourged at the pillar and nailed to the bitter tree, so she suffered in his members during the first persecutions; was scourged in Paul and John, and beheaded in James, and stoned in Stephen, being meanwhile the model of all in faith that never faltered, in hope that never was dimmed, and in that all-bearing love which waiteth for his coming throughout the interminable years.

How true a mirror of maidenhood and womanhood. How clearly can one view in the life of that Mother of Sorrows the lot which all true women must accept. And how consoling for all these classes of toilers, sufferers, and waiters, whose trials, labours, duties, and virtues we are now going to set forth.

I.

THE DAUGHTERS OF THE WEALTHY HOME.

We have no further concern here with maidens who remain beneath the roof of their parents till they have chosen a home of their own in matrimony, or in religious life. What has been said must

suffice for them, inasmuch as we suppose their mothers to have faithfully discharged towards them all the offices of motherhood. Our present concern is with the daughters of wealthy families, on whom poverty has fallen while still unmarried.

GIRLS REARED IN AFFLUENCE AND FORCED TO LABOUR.

1. We approach this large and most interesting class with a feeling of infinite reverence. We know that their numbers have much increased of late years even in our midst, in spite of all the securities which surround the wealthy in a country untroubled by socialism; and in spite, also, of the facilities afforded in a young and prosperous community for recruiting impaired fortunes. And our reverence is founded on the magnanimity with which so many young girls, brought up in luxury and with the most splendid prospects, accept the reverse that befalls them, and set to work to lighten the hard lot of father and mother, and not unfrequently to provide for the wants of their whole family.

HEROIC WOMEN IN ADVERSITY LIKE CHOICE VINES ON A BARREN SOIL.

It will serve our purpose to pursue this comparison a little farther. The vines which bear the most renowned fruit and produce the wine most eagerly sought for, are not those that grow on the rich and sheltered lowlands; just as the women most admirable for heroic endurance and perseverance are those

who have to grow up in toil and trial and self-reliance. Let us listen to this description by a recent traveller of the port-wine district in Portugal:—

"As I ascended the ridge of mountains which separates the valley of Villa Real from the port-wine district, I became entangled in a net-work of paths. . . . On either side of the river Douro lies a district about twenty-seven miles in length and six or seven in breadth, of steep hills, with narrow, ravine-like valleys; the soil a naked, yellow-brown, slaty schist. . . . Looked at from where I now stood, and seen in the thin atmosphere of early morning, with every detail sharp and clear as in a photograph, with hill beyond hill extending confusedly below, the appearance was that of a wilderness of utterly bare and arid peak and valley. . . . All over the sides of each acclivity, stone terraces have been built, in lines running parallel with the horizon; and in the poor schistous soil thus kept from being washed away by the rains of winter, the vines which make port wine are grown. . . . If Portugal were to lapse into an uninhabited wilderness to-morrow, this monument of man's accumulated handiwork would probably outlast every single work of Roman, Goth, Saracen, and Portuguese. . . .

"The flavour of the wine here produced depends upon the nature of the soil, certainly not upon its richness; for the surface of the vineyards looks like the rubbish thrown up from a stone quarry; and it depends also upon the great heat of the summer in a district shut off by lofty hills from the north and the north-east. The cold of winter among these high-lying lands is, however, for Portugal

very considerable; snow falls and lies, even in the valleys, and frost often lasts for the whole twenty-four hours. This comparative cold arrests the winter growth of the vine, and gives it the rest which the plants of temperate climates require, and is probably one cause of the superiority of produce of these vines over those grown in other parts of Portugal. . . . The upland vine is less productive, but makes a finer wine than that grown in the plain."*

HEAR MASS DAILY.

We have seen that, among the rules which every Christian knight had to observe faithfully, the very first was, "with pious remembrance, every day to hear the Mass of God's passion." If this was a sworn observance of every gentle knight, how much more so was it and ought it ever to be of every true and gentle lady? In the dear old city of Quebec, where the writer was brought up from early boyhood to manhood, one of his most vivid recollections is the sound of the cathedral bell calling the working people—the market folk, particularly, who are very early risers—to Mass at four o'clock every morning of the year. And he who took on himself the duty of being thus ever ready at the altar of the Lamb each morning was the most venerable and most learned man among the entire clergy of Canada.

Later, when many years a priest himself, the author remembers being touched to the depths of his soul by the simple and heroic piety of a poor servant girl, who, from year's end to year's end, never could

* John Latouche: "Travels in Portugal," pp. 121-123.

retire before midnight, and "who had made a pact with her Guardian Angel to wake her up daily in time for the first Mass" at the Church of St. Francis Xavier. Everywhere in Catholic countries it is the custom to ring the Angelus bell so early that workmen of every description may have time to assist at the Adorable Sacrifice, before attending to their daily labour in house or field. Thus, if you chance to be passing up the Rhone valley in June or July, you will see, at the first sound of the Angelus bell, all who are not already in the village church hastening thither, taking with them their implements of labour, which they leave outside in the porch before entering the sacred precincts. Shall we, in this New World, where we are so free and so encouraged to plant and cultivate the loveliest flowers of Catholic piety, shall we not delight in sanctifying our daily toil after the manner of our forefathers? And will your own consciences, O Christian women and maidens! not upbraid you with the neglect of such mighty graces as are thus daily within your reach?

> "Ah, wasteful woman! . . .
> How given for nought her priceless gift,
> How spoiled the bread and spilled the wine,
> Which, spent with due, respective thrift,
> Had made brutes men, and men divine!"

Believe it: the moral hardship endured in such occupation as we here treat of needs supernatural strength, and how one half-hour spent early before the mercy-seat, in sweet communion with Him who is the Bread of Life, and whose blood, applied to us in the sacrament, intoxicates like wine, and lifts us

above ourselves, will send us forth filled with an energy and a joy all divine, to brave everything, and undergo everything, for his dear sake! Be the supernatural woman in your present trial; be a true child of God, and He will be with you!

LADY COMPANIONS AND GOVERNESSES.

2. Although we did not expressly mention this most interesting and deserving class of ladies, when instructing the mistress of the home in her duties towards her children and dependents, we meant that all that is said in various places should apply in a special manner to those whom she associates with herself as a companion, friend, and adviser, or as an assistant in educating her children.

The lot of most governesses is a hard one; but, nevertheless, it is far preferable to that of the very uncomfortable person known as a lady companion. A governess has work to do—hard work very often, and, oftener still, most miserably requited. But her very hard work is her salvation from discouragement and despair. A lady companion, generally, has no defined position in the family, no definite duties to perform, no set work at certain hours, to which she can give her whole heart and mind—forgetful of all else, for the present hour, but of the pleasure of doing work—and good work—on souls, or for souls, in his honour who is the passionate Lover of souls.

A lady companion, for the most part, is a kind of slave to the caprices of an aged, infirm, and whimsical person, tied down to every caprice of her selfish old tyrant, unable to apply herself to any improving or congenial occupation, and continually

humiliated by the neglect of the family or the petty insults of the domestics, unable to resent either the odious pride and uncharitableness of the former, or the studied insolence of the latter.

Happy the sensitive soul, born to better fortunes, often born in a sphere far superior to that of her present employers, who chances to fall on a truly noble-minded and large-hearted Christian woman! For there are many Christian women whose little minds and selfish, narrow hearts, in spite of their long profession and practice of a certain kind of piety, would justify the very common belief that they were as surely born with an intellect as narrow as a linnet's, or a heart as small as a mouse's, as some people are born stone-blind or deprived of arms and legs. No education (but such women cannot have been educated!) seems to have enlarged their very small notions of things, and no practice of devotion has made a place in their hearts for anything but their little self.

ADVICE TO LADY COMPANIONS.

But no matter what may be the rank of the family in which a lady companion is admitted—from royalty down to the latest fortune—she who resolves to accept such a position must expect to find it one of the most irksome servitude. For one elevated and religious womanly soul who will treat a companion with the respect due to gentle birth and breeding, and the delicate considerateness due to misfortune, there will be found ten unwomanly natures who will think it is due to their own place and importance to make a dependent feel her inferiority at every

moment of the day and night. Where there is great intellectual culture united to solid piety, there is little to fear of the constant humiliations inflicted by those who are conscious of no superiority but that of rank or riches. True piety is always humble, charitable, considerate, kind, and courteous. Happy the young lady who becomes the companion of such a one! She will find motherly care in one who is her elder, and a true sisterly friendship in one of her own years.

But this is a rare case; and, when it happens, the fortunate companion has only one rule to follow—to devote herself, heart and mind, to the comfort and interests of one fitted to appreciate every gift of mind and heart.

God, in his admirable ways, has a most important mission for lady companions, and that mission is most remarkable in our own days. Numberless families, in countries where unbelief or scepticism is general, have been enlightened and converted by the agency of a pious, high-principled, and cultivated lady, forced by circumstances to accept the position of companion to the mistress of the house. This occurs not unfrequently among ourselves. But it is of still more frequent occurrence in England and on the European continent. While in France we heard instances quoted of most remarkable conversions effected among the Russian nobility by persons thus selected for their goodness and accomplishments to serve as lady companions in great families. One, however, which happened in France itself, and which resulted in making most fervent Christians of an entire family given over to unbelief, may serve to show

both what a thoroughly good lady companion can do by example and teaching, and what is expected that a true woman, well-bred, refined, and alive to the claims of hospitality, should do in all cases.

Though some readers may fancy the good fortune of the young lady here mentioned to be an ideal, or, at least, an exceptional case—it is certainly, to our own knowledge, not so rare. Let it, however, serve as a mirror for ladies blessed by fortune, and in a position to befriend a class of persons most deserving of all their tenderest and most delicate sympathy. We shall see afterwards the "reverse of the medal."

TRUE KINDNESS REWARDED BY HEROIC DEVOTION.

While the so-called "Tractarian Movement" was at its height, about 1840, an aged English gentleman, with his only daughter, a lovely girl of nineteen, had sought during the winter months the mild climate of Southern France, with the vain hope of staying the approach of death. He was of a good family, of cultivated mind and refined taste, deeply interested in the controversy then agitating the English universities, and looking forward with an earnest longing to the day when the churches of Western Europe would be again one in faith and communion. Some years before, while seeking health among the valleys of Tuscany and Umbria, he had been fortunate in forming an intimate acquaintance with a noble and ancient family, in which deep faith and practical piety went hand-in-hand. The English-
's intellectual objections against the Church of
were met with masterly skill by the amiable

and accomplished head of the house; and his inveterate prejudices concerning Roman superstitions and idolatry found an eloquent refutation in the lives of his friend's wife, children, and dependents. Frequent and delightful excursions among the beautiful villages and historical sites which abound in that paradisiacal region, enabled the invalid to convince himself that the Italian country folk were solidly virtuous, that their piety was anything but blind superstition, or their attachment to religion and its teachers one founded on fear and self-interest. He could not help contrasting the comfort, the refinement, the bright and quick intelligence, and the courteous manners of the mass of the rural population, with the stolidity, ignorance, and coarseness of the same class in his own country.

Still, his convictions only led him to see that there were only fewer objections than he had fancied towards the reunion of the apostolic Church of England with the equally apostolic Rome. His stay in France afterwards did not tend to bring him nearer to the truth. It was only a few months before his end that the conversion of his daughter became the occasion of his own. She had been a warm admirer of the writings of Keble and Newman. The sweet songs of the "Christian Year" had been favourites with her from childhood; but the celebration of the great feasts of the year in the beautiful churches of Italy, far more than the festivals of France, convinced the girl that the great reality conceived by Keble was to be found, not in the empty Anglican liturgy, but in the time-honoured worship of the Church of Rome. She had also read with deep

interest Newman's beautiful sketches of the early fathers, and of their love of monastic life. She found in France, as well as in Italy, religious communities of men and women, whose life was in perfect conformity with the pictures contained in the writings of St. Ambrose, St. Jerome, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Basil. Father and daughter compared their impressions and their difficulties: she besought and obtained permission to be received into the Catholic Church, and her rapt happiness on the day of her First Communion so powerfully moved the parent that ten days afterwards the same happiness was his own. Thenceforward, till his peaceful end came, the bliss of both was only clouded by the grief of the approaching separation, and the thought on the dying father's mind that he left his child totally unprovided for.

The estates which he owned were entailed; and as he had no sons, they descended to his nephew, a Low Churchman, to whose mind both the deceased and his child were the worst kind of apostates. She was informed, a few days after her father's burial, that her family had entirely cast her off, and that she could have no further claim on them for support or sympathy.

The generous girl did not lose heart on that account: she had a firm trust in Him for whose sake she was prepared to make any sacrifice, and was determined to support herself by her own exertions, without ever appealing to her relatives at home, or accepting aid from strangers. She was a proficient in music and painting, spoke five languages, and had been trained, during her constant companionship with her father, to be eminently practical.

A noble French lady, who had made their acquaintance at Florence some years before, happened to live in the neighbourhood of the town in which they had been staying. She felt a warm sympathy for the lovely orphan, whose many accomplishments and beautiful character she admired. She was exceedingly kind during the last illness of the parent, made her husband superintend all the arrangements for the funeral, and then insisted on taking her young friend home with her for a few weeks' repose and distraction from her bereavement.

A low fever, brought on by long bodily fatigue and severe mental trials, compelled a stay of several months with the family, at the end of which the lady proposed that she should make the castle her home for the next year, hoping that, in the interval, the relatives of the interesting English girl would relax from a rigour which she could not understand. Her young guest, in her perplexity, seeing no avenue open to her through the difficulties of her lonely lot, yielded a reluctant consent. There were five children in the house, two sons and three daughters, the oldest of whom was a girl of fifteen; they were under the care of an elderly lady, who acted as governess; and these, with the grandmother, a titled and stately old dame of the last century, with a large retinue of servants, composed the household.

Not till after a week's stay in the castle did our heroine, whom we shall call Miss Edwards, discover that the old dowager was a rank Voltairian; that her son, the count, was an avowed Materialist; while the countess only clung to the religion of her fathers by her attachment to the Legitimist cause. The

children were brought up in open and avowed unbelief, although the governess still seemed to keep up in private a few simple practices of devotion.

The dowager-countess, who had followed her family into exile during the Reign of Terror, spoke English fairly, and was in all things a great admirer of England, save, as she was wont to say, "the absurd and superstitious reverence of the English for a church establishment which was only Popery without the Mass, and with the reigning Prime Minister for Pope." She took a great liking for the beautiful orphan, insisted on her having her apartments next to her own rooms, and put forth all the graces of a cultivated mind, and the charm of most fascinating manners, in consoling her during her first grief, in soothing her suffering during her illness, and in amusing her loneliness during convalescence. The old lady was kind-hearted; her scepticism was the result of her early training and associations, and it was very seriously shaken by the unaffected piety and deep, unquestioning faith of the little convert.

The latter had to relate to her venerable friend the whole story of her own and her father's conversion. This was told in presence of the count and countess, who, for the first time in their lives, felt an irresistible attraction towards the recital of interior struggles of two superior souls seeking for a perfect religious faith, and, when found, giving up the whole world to secure and enjoy its possession. Unconsciously the little convalescent was drawn into giving her own explanations of Catholic doctrine and practice; the perfect harmony history establishes between the Church of the nineteenth and that of the fourth and

fifth centuries; the beautiful significance of the sacramental system; and the power of the solemn Church ceremonial in lifting the soul up to God. Then came a most interesting discussion of Catholic theories of art. Indeed, the first acquaintance of the count and countess with their eloquent little teacher—for such she now was—had been made while the latter was sketching some of the most beautiful frescoes of the Baptistery in Florence. Now, as she progressed towards perfect health, these sketches were exhibited, and the children were invited, with their governess, to be present at the charming stories about mediæval Christian art and artists, which the young girl poured forth as one inspired.

And she was. During her fever she had almost vowed—at any rate, she had made herself a promise—that she would devote herself to the hospitable family into which, in her extremity of distress, she had been received and treated with such respect and tenderness; she would not quit that interesting household till she had enriched it with the only treasure she possessed in the world—a living faith.

The countess, who had conceived a true motherly affection for the gifted girl, protested that she would never part with her, and the dowager declared that Miss Edwards had become necessary to her. So, to quiet the latter's scruples and laudable self-love, it was arranged that she would stay in the family as companion to the old countess, who, on her side wanted to adopt the girl as her daughter.

About ten weeks after her father's death, Miss Edwards received the visit of a young cousin travel-

ling with his mother, and who was all but betrothed to his fair relative. They had spent the winter in Palermo, and had learned in Rome of the death of Mr. Edwards, without, however, hearing then of his having died a Catholic. The son was deeply attached to his cousin; he was the heir to a title and a splendid fortune, and would have laid both at her feet if she consented to renounce what his mother called "the Papal delusion." But, though the mother pleaded earnestly with her niece, she found her proof against all the arguments she could draw from theology, love, and ambition; and mother and son left the castle without any offer of marriage being made.

It was a keen pang for the young and fortuneless orphan: she loved her kinsman, though she said not so; and when he had gone, she was found in an agony of tears by the countess, who, touched to the heart, employed all the tenderness and delicacy of a true womanly affection in soothing her friend's bitter distress.

Let us abridge this narrative. The dowager, before a twelvemonth had elapsed, died reconciled to the faith of her childhood, blessing her whom she called her daughter and angel guardian as the minister of God's mercy in her own behalf. From her son, with her dying breath, she exacted the promise that he should follow his mother's latest example, rear his children as true practical Catholics, and have especial care of the Christian education of his servants and numerous dependents.

The promise was faithfully kept. The conversation, the angelic life of Miss Edwards, the influence which her piety and goodness exercised on his

children and the entire household, had made a deep impression on him. Since his first communion he had never approached the sacraments. But the deep peace which had settled on his mother, after her reconciliation with God, had recalled the sweet happiness of his own innocent years. Then he gave his cordial support to Miss Edwards, while she set about, at his request, instructing and preparing th three oldest children for confession and communion.

Nor was this all; the servants were also drawn to the beautiful young stranger. She took it on herself to instruct them likewise, and said with them the rosary and night prayers every day, explaining so interestingly this beautiful devotion that, at length, the whole household joined in night prayers, the count himself reciting them.

All this while the countess remained proof to every argument and example. Tenderly as she loved, and greatly as she admired Miss Edwards, the worldly education she had received, and her intimacy with one of the foremost female infidel writers of France, seemed to render her impervious to the light of truth and the influence of others' holy life. Nevertheless, she consented to aid her young friend in restoring the beautiful little family chapel in the castle. It had been neglected for more than sixty years, and served as a lumber-room. But, as she was herself a great lover of art, she gratefully accepted her friend's offer to decorate and paint it with her own hand. Miss Edwards had secretly vowed to do so in order to obtain the grace of the countess's conversion.

So the good count had the chapel cleared of every profane article, had the windows repaired, new

furniture purchased, and a temporary altar made, the rector of the parish being invited to celebrate Mass. It was quite a family festival for the household and the numerous tenantry.

Thenceforward Miss Edwards and the countess laboured together to prepare designs for the frescoes, the illumination of the wood and ironwork, and the restoration of the mutilated stained glass in the windows. The two oldest children by this time were able to work at some of the details; for our little apostle had been forced by her noble patrons to open a little school of art in the castle, and she found, or created, enthusiastic pupils.

And so the years sped by. Inside and outside of the castle the zeal and charity of the two ladies were felt in many a home, and their names mentioned together in many a heartfelt blessing and fervent prayer. It was precisely what our little heroine wanted, that our friend should seem to have herself the initiative in every good work, so as to remove all cause of jealousy, and that she should have before the people the merit of every charitable deed. Thus all were, in reality, praying for the noble lady's conversion.

Miss Edwards would persist in calling herself the countess's companion, though the latter loved her, and treated her as the dearest of sisters. They spent two seasons together in Paris, where the countess's friends were surprised at seeing her assiduous, together with her husband, at divine service on Sundays and holy-days, and devoted to every prominent work of charity, while she continued to be attentive all the duties required of her by her position in

society. Some of her friends affirmed that Miss Edwards must be a female Jesuit, sent by the crafty order to the family of the count, to convert his mother and himself, and to make sure, after his death, of a good share of his property. All this absurd gossip did not serve the cause of unbelief in the estimation of the countess. Still the false shame, called human respect, held her back from avowing to her husband, or to her dear young friend, that she yearned to have their faith; for she did not, and, as she thought, *could not believe*. Nor could she be induced to pray.

Such was her state of mind when the revolution of February, 1848, drove Louis Philippe into exile, and inaugurated once more a republican form of government in France. The count was elected a member of the National Assembly, and this circumstance led the countess and Miss Edwards to accompany him to Paris, at the very moment the cholera was raging most virulently. The countess, alarmed, was just preparing to return to her family when she was seized by the plague. Her friend at once, as by a sudden inspiration, offered her own life to God in exchange of that of the countess, on the condition that He would bestow on that dear soul the gift of faith. The sacrifice was accepted, the countess was spared to live and die a most fervent Christian; Miss Edwards was carried off by the pestilence, rejoicing that God had heard her prayer, and beseeching Him to remember in his mercy her friends in England, and one above all others, whose love still lived in her faithful heart.

PRACTICAL RULES FOR GOVERNESSES.

The preceding narrative must dispense us with much counselling. We have in it touched upon some of the difficulties that this numerous, hard-worked, little understood, and ill-paid class of persons have to meet with. We trust in God's blessing on this book, that wealthy mothers who read it, especially if they be such as would listen respectfully to a priest's instruction or adjuration, will be touched by his grace to deal kindly, gently, generously, in all Christian charity and courtesy, with those to whom they commit the whole or part of their own sacred function of teaching and educating.

Parents, of whatever rank, should remember that young women who fit themselves, by long and careful training, for the sacred functions of educators in families, are persons whom it is almost sacrilege to treat with any sort of disrespect; what, then, must the guilt be when such persons are degraded systematically, not only in the eyes of servants and other dependents, but especially in the eyes of the children whom they are expected to instruct and educate.

Surely mothers—Christian mothers—alive to the surpassing importance of a thorough moral education, and conscious, too, of the sacredness of the duties that devolve on all persons to whom they intrust the training of their children, ought to be also aware of the absolute necessity of securing to such persons the utmost respect and consideration within their own households. The reasons for this are peremptory. In the first place, these persons represent the

mother herself (represent, indeed, both parents), in her most sacred office of teacher. Now, reverence for the mother's person, and for this her office, demands that all who fill her place shall be reverenced in like manner. The second reason, akin to the first, is, that to teach, one must have authority; for, as we have said in another chapter, "without authority there can be no discipline, and without discipline there can be no education." A third reason is, that the dearest interests of both parents and children are involved in the result of this education; the interest of the parents, whose happiness must depend largely on the moral and intellectual advancement of their offspring, and, above all, the interest of the children, whose future, temporal and eternal, is mostly secured or sacrificed by the training they receive.

It would seem inconceivable, therefore, that even worldly-minded parents should be so blind to what they owe themselves and their children, as not to choose their governesses with exceeding care, and to treat those of their choice with equal affection and respect. But that a Christian mother, fearing God and her own accountability to Him, should not deem it a most conscientious duty to have her governess reverenced as she would have her own self, and aid in securing her the regard and affection, not only of her pupils, but of servants, friends, and acquaintance, is simply monstrous.

We appeal, then, to the worshipped and zealous mothers whose whole heart is in their home-work, in making of their sons and daughters children of God, to welcome to their families the governess they have

scrupulously selected as they would an own sister, and to make her feel that she is regarded as such.

This is one of the home charities, and it is also good policy. We now address ourselves to the governesses themselves.

WHAT A GOOD GOVERNESS MUST OBSERVE.

She also must have her heart in her work, loving it for its own sake, and for the sake of Him who is to be both her chief helper and her magnificent rewarder, and for the sake of the children, whose welfare and future abilty must depend so largely on her labours.

Bear this well in mind: your success, even supposing you could succeed without his ever-present help, would be a barren and a joyless one without having your heart set on seeking and pleasing God before and above all things. This is the *sursum corda* of the divine sacrifice, the lifting of our hearts and aims to Him from whom are light, and knowledge, and docility of soul, and progress in all the ways of true wisdom and true happiness. Cultivate and cherish this loftiness of heart.

Be conscious of your own fitness for every branch you have to teach, and do not rest satisfied with a half knowledge of any science which may be necessary or useful to you. Remember that, so long as you live, devoting yourself as you do to teaching, *you must study to improve yourself.* This conscientious desire for perfecting yourself in everything worth the knowing, and the knowing well, will be to you a most precious resource should you happen to be with a family where you are left to yourself. In religious

orders, one of whose chief labours is that of teaching, professors after their class hours are left to the solitude of their own rooms. He who writes these lines has himself thus taught for a good part of his life; and he knows by experience how sweet is that solitude in which one may refresh one's heart in brief and sweet communion with God, or in completing one's knowledge on some topic of actual interest or probable future necessity.

Be most conscientious in preparing the matters you have to teach, as well as in taking the very best means to communicate your knowledge to each one of your young hearers. If your heart is in your work, you can scarcely fail in this. Study carefully the characters, dispositions, and ability of each pupil. Love them, make them love you. Omit no art or exertion which can make them consider the school-room as a delightful place, and school-hours as a time of real enjoyment. There will be true enjoyment for them if each hour and each lesson makes them feel that they have learned something. The ripe fruit from the tree of knowledge, which you will gather for them and present to them daily, you can make the daintiest and most appetising of fruits, if you only use your woman's skill and cunning in preparing it.

With those who are slow be patient. Do not confound slowness with dullness. In looking back over our own college years, and those spent in teaching, we can now see many, very many boys, who were considered dull because they had not the retentive memory or quick apprehension of others among their school-mates But many of the men of quick wit

and powerful memory have come to nothing, like trees blossoming before their time, and dropping their unformed fruit before autumn had arrived; while we now see the slow men, some even of the reputed dunces, foremost in the senate, at the bar, on the bench, or gracing the priesthood.

Form the judgment and intelligence of your pupils well, without, however, neglecting their memory. Make them understand everything, give them a reason for everything; illustrate what is difficult or obscure by comparisons or analogies. All this will give the young minds you are forming a thirst for study, and will attach them to you; for just as women of your age can make the very birds, beasts, and fishes troop together to be fed by them, or even take their food fearlessly from the well-known hand, even so will the minds which you feed daily with sweet and dainty food yearn to be with you for fresh nourishment.

Be gentle, calm, self-possessed, well-bred, and reserved. There is always in a true womanly heart a good deal of motherly affection and tenderness, which children will feel as they would the sparks from a charged electric receiver. Let them feel that in your heart there is that genuine pulse of motherly kindness, while you restrain it, and keep on it the check of reserve and dignity. Outside of school-hours, let this lady-like and dignified reserve never quit you.

Then, again, never omit an opportunity of increasing your pupils' love for their mother. This is one of your duties, and its faithful discharge will not fail to make her your fast friend. Show her your-

self the utmost respect, and avoid seeking to be familiar or confidential, no matter how much you may be disposed to be so.

You will need great patience with all children; with some you will need extreme patience. You must endeavour to school yourself to *supernatural* patience, practised for his love who consummated our redemption, and bought our souls from hell by going to the pillar and the cross like a lamb to the slaughter. Few are the souls, no matter how stubborn, how vicious, how perverse, which are not overcome and won by meekness and forbearance.

Bear and forbear, then, if you are sensitive, and know yourself prone to exaggerate or to create, in your trouble, phantoms which disappear with the return of serenity of soul. Precisely because you are thus sensitive and fanciful, never act or speak under irritation or emotion. How often have we to regret what is spoken or done impulsively! How often do over-sensitive and imaginative persons make themselves utterly miserable over a word or a look to which their own fancy lent a meaning and a colouring without any existence in reality.

Be strong enough, brave enough, to bear with a great deal, both because all have to bear with much, and because the very patience practised at the present moment may purchase for us the grace which shall secure all our future happiness. It often happens that in a family, the mistress whose looks or words offend others, all unconsciously to herself, is sadly burdened with many cares and griefs, and most deserving of your heartfelt compassion. If the sore heart, which she heroically conceals while filling

all the duties of her station, were laid bare to you, you would kneel down to worship its goodness, instead of taking offence at the look of pain never meant for you, or the unconscious word wrung from her as from one on the rack.

And *forbear*, from judging, from speaking, from acting hastily even on your good impulses. Be *mistress in the house of your own soul*, especially while you are under the roof of another; and this discipline will enable you, when God's good time has come for you, to be truly *mistress of your own house*, governing it patiently, gently, lovingly, and wisely; loved of your husband, your children, your servants. All this will come of that sweet womanly forbearance learned and practised by you while dependent on others.

Imitate to the utmost of your power the examples of the lovely girl mentioned in the section on lady companions. Should the family in which you find yourself be one lost to all sense of religion, see what your example may do to enlighten them. Perhaps God has sent you to them to be the means of their salvation. Perhaps their conversion may be the sole work on which your own eternal salvation depends. It may even be that there can be for you no place in the Company of the Blessed, save on the condition of having these souls now given to your zeal as a living crown around you there. Is it not worth while to try what you can do with them? And, then, again, is not the Divine Workman with you, in whose hand you are only an instrument? Ah! we do not consider often enough, all of us, priests and laymen, men and women, young and old, how much good He

would do with us, poor weak instruments though we be, if we would only leave ourselves passively, humbly in the Almighty hand! Nor do we take time to reflect that even a living instrument, a living heart, which will not obey that wise and loving hand, exposes itself to be cast into the fire. . . .

Persons who have been well brought up, and have had from infancy all the opportunities and graces necessary to form both mind and heart, are but too apt to misjudge families which have never enjoyed these advantages—families that have risen to opulence through a brave struggle with obstacles of every kind, and in which the parents are either unconscious of their own deficiencies, or deplore them most bitterly. When brought suddenly into contact with such persons, we are shocked and repelled by their rusticity, their rudeness, their apparent lack, not of culture only, but of all religious principle. We judge rashly.

One most dear to the writer, and who is now with God, happened to be situated in some such circumstances as these. A privileged and beautiful soul himself, and blessed from his birth with all the divinest influences of a Christian home and training, he found himself all at once living with people foreign to him in religion, in culture, in manners, even in the way they spoke his language and judged of all things human and divine. There was discontent, aversion, and a repulsion so great that he was on the point of withdrawing from a place to which, as events proved, he had been providentially led for the benefit of this very people.

On the eve of the day fixed for his departure, he

dreamed that he was travelling in a mountainous region and had to scale a lofty chain which opposed itself like a wall to his further progress. As he climbed with his guide the fair slope facing the south and east, their path lay through a succession of lordly oaks and chesnuts, to the fir and heath-covered region near the top, where every variety of wild flower grew and scented the air. But the steep northern acclivity offered a barren and almost naked wall of rock, on which a ray of the sun never rested, and deep, dark ravines running down to the gloomy valley beneath. As our young traveller gazed amazed and impatient at this scene of weird desolation, murmuring against the barrenness and horrors of the place, and contrasting it with the smiling and fruitful slopes they had just passed, he was reproved by his mysterious guide. "See you not," said he, "that the cause of all this wealth of tree and shrub and flower that you have been admiring and praising, is the sunlight which floods it the whole year round, while not one ray of the beneficent light ever warms these steep walls of barren rock, or cheers the deep gloom of yonder fearful ravines?"

The sleeper awoke to understand that man's soul, also, needs the sunlight of divine grace to warm its barren and rugged nature, its dark and dangerous sides, into life and fertility and moral loveliness. So he remained true to his post, and the spot where that vision was sent him now blooms with the fairest flowers and fruits of supernatural goodness.

Let us also be warned by our own very fretfulness, impatience, and uncharitableness that it is not the [illegible] of God who inspires our distaste or aversion;

and let us gain his blessing by applying ourselves, with his aid, to bring light into the dark places, and to make what is barren and naked bloom like the garden of God.

Where this inferiority of culture is apparent in the mistress of the home, it must be your study never to allow her to feel that you perceive her deficiency or that you are conscious of your own superiority. On the contrary, you must endeavour to be more respectful and deferential than if she were your superior in intelligence and accomplishments, as she is in wealt or social position.

Should it so happen, however, that you cannot remain in the family, no matter from what cause, there are two things which it behoves you to observe in leaving: the one, that you continue to the very last moment to show yourself the true lady, not permitting yourself either complaint or quarrel, though never so bitterly provoked, that not a word escapes your lips that can lower you in your own esteem; the other is to make every sacrifice of feeling, temper, and even interest, rather than not part in perfect friendship with the family.

But, supposing the worst, that you cannot leave, and that your life is almost made intolerable, we cannot impress on you too strongly the necessity of strengthening your soul by prayer, by the sacraments, and by an unfailing trust in God.

SCHOOL-TEACHERS.

The rules given above to governesses, as well for their spiritual advancement, as for their intellectual improvement, their thoroughness in every branch

they undertake to teach, their devotion to their pupils, and their general deportment, apply to this most numerous and most respectable class of women, young women, for the most part, in our country.

To parents who destine their daughters for this most important and most honourable profession, as well as to young girls who feel impelled towards it, there is one suggestion we feel bound to make. Let no influence or temptation ever induce the former to send their daughters to mixed colleges or normal schools, or the young girls themselves to consent to go there. It is one of those extreme cases where parents who fear God, instead of using their authority to throw their innocent children in the way of certain danger, are bound, on the contrary, to use it in dissuading and preventing them from a course fraught with peril.

SPECIAL TRAINING FOR SCHOOL-TEACHERS: IN ENGLAND.

We are addressing our advice to Catholic parents, of course; to those of other denominations we have no right to speak. In England, the pupil-teachers who are preparing to graduate as school-mistresses receive a special training from the Sisters of Notre Dame de Namur, or from the Sisterhood of the Holy Child Jesus, both of which were especially selected by the Government, in conjunction with the bishops, as the persons best fitted to train young girls for this vocation.

HIGH STANDARD OF EXCELLENCE.

This continual seeking after the highest excellence, both in the sciences to be acquired and in the methods of communicating knowledge to others, has a most

elevating effect on the Sisters themselves, as well as on the pupil-teachers. It compels the former—even were they inclined to be satisfied with a low standard of excellence—to aim at having in their own professors and in their methods the very highest ideal, and of never being satisfied with mediocrity or a wretched system of make-shifts.

It is the wish and the aim of the hierarchy to have for all Catholic schools teachers trained to this twofold superiority of knowledge and method, as well as moral purity. This is a result which all good Catholics and good citizens are bound to promote by every means within their power. For on our success in forming school-teachers equal at least, if not superior, to all others in attainments and practical ability, and decidedly superior in living faith and practical piety, depends not only the welfare of the state, but the honour and prosperity of religion itself.

So, in religious communities, where such young girls are formed, no pains or sacrifice should be spared to make them perfect and unexceptionable in every way; every such pupil sent out from our academies ought to be enabled to take her stand at once before the public as an accomplished teacher and a trustworthy teacher. In our parish schools the formation of these young girls ought to be for the pastor, and for all who assist him in the divine labours of education, a matter of unremitting zeal. While directors of conscience, when they have discovered what is the bent of these young girls, ought to bestow on their guidance and instruction in solid and enlightened piety more than ordinary care.

The whole future of the Church and the country lies in this very point.

IMPORTANCE OF PROPER REMUNERATION.

To our magistrates, legislators, and public men who have not only the making and administration of our laws, but the distribution of the public money and the remuneration of every public trust and service, we would earnestly represent: that of all the professions devoted to the service of the commonwealth not one is more worthy of respect and liberal support than that whose sole occupation is to educate the sons and daughters of the labouring classes, and not one, at this writing, is more exposed to be sacrificed to the illiberal and ignorant cupidity of our municipal politicians.

Defenceless young women, who have spent all their years since early girlhood in fitting themselves for this most important function of public teaching, are not only overworked, but they are underpaid, and are threatened with a further reduction of the wretched pittance received from the people's money.

They are the daughters of the people, intrusted with the performance of the labour of all others most affecting the homes and happiness of the people. We appeal to the people to see to it that their hard-earned money go rather to the support, independence, and necessary comfort of this devoted class of teachers, than to swell the already too rich gains of so many functionaries without anything like a serious function to perform.

ADVICE TO THE TEACHERS THEMSELVES.

To the teachers themselves we cannot too earnestly

recommend a sincere love of their profession, a firm determination to rise daily to a higher degree of excellence both in their knowledge and method of teaching, a love of their holy work for the sake of the work itself, and a fervent piety which will not only enable them to see God present in the school-room and aiding their own earnest labours, but God's angels, too, invisibly present and seconding every effort to enlighten the young minds and hearts intrusted to them.

DEVOTION TO THE GUARDIAN ANGELS.

Never begin your class without a prayer to the Guardian Angels; make your little ones join you in it. Give them an early knowledge and love of these glorious spirits; teach them what their ministry is towards us, who are God's adopted children. This will easily seize upon intelligence, imagination, and affections. This sweet and most beautiful devotion to the holy angels appeals easily to the heart of childhood; and, besides, it places the mind of youth in the central truth of the entire supernatural order of which Christ is King, and these great spirits are the administrators in our behalf.

PUPILS AND PARENTS.

Do not be cast down or discouraged in your divine work of doing the best you can with every child committed to you, either by the rudeness or perverseness of the children themselves, or by the ignorance or stupidity of the parents. Well do we know how much the work of education depends on the sympathy, the support, the cordial co-operation of the parents,

Well also know we how dispiriting it is to find anything but sympathy or support from those to whom one would naturally look for both; how the head aches and the heart burns, when a superior is cold or indifferent where he ought to be fervent in his praise and most zealous in his assistance, or when a stolid father or peevish mother interferes to prevent all reformation or progress in a child, or to ruin discipline by taking away from the teacher all authority.

IN DEEPEST DISCOURAGEMENT SEEK CHRIST.

These hardships, of general and daily occurrence, make the load a poor teacher has to bear intolerable: and what can we say to each one of you, who faint beneath your burden, without a voice to cheer you or a hand to raise you up? This: Look to Him who is ever by your side, especially in your hour of trial. "The whole life of Christ was a cross and a martyrdom: and dost thou seek for thyself rest and joy? Thou errest, thou errest, if thou seekest aught else than to suffer tribulation; for this whole mortal life is full of miseries and everywhere marked with crosses. . . . Set thyself, then, like a good and faithful servant of Christ, to bear manfully the cross of thy Lord, for the love of Him who was crucified for thee." *

* "Imitation of Christ," B. II., ch. x

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE DIVINE COMFORTS OF POVERTY AND TOIL.

VERILY, without this magnificent brotherhood between angels and men, and between man and God Himself incarnate in the Son of Mary, and become the elder Brother of us all, there would be but little light to cheer the dark places of perpetual and hopeless toil, but little comfort to warm poverty shivering over the expiring embers on her hearth-stone, with scarcely a morsel of bread for to-day and naught but bitter forebodings for the morrow. What would the world be—even the labour world of free America—without the faith in Him who said, "Blessed are the poor! . . . For theirs is the kingdom of heaven!" Oh! fools, fools that we are ever for one moment to forget or overlook the sublime, the all-embracing REALITY, that we are the heirs of eternal bliss, toiling, suffering, humiliated for a little space of life, to rest, to enjoy, to be glorified everlastingly.

Hail, then, ye daughters of toil and poverty, infinitely dear to the heart of Jesus Christ, dear to the heart of his poverty-loving Mother, and most dear to that of royal Joseph—Joseph the carpenter, whose existence was devoted to unwearied toil for the support of these two, and whose blissful privilege it was to die in their embrace, cheered by their voice, and

made infallibly sure of the eternal joys by the presence and the word of the Redeemer of Israel! May He inspire us with words of light and strength that may find their way to your minds to show you in what a right royal road you are travelling, if yours be the path of hard and unceasing toil, and reach your hearts to make you love this divine company of toilers in which our Jesus is ever chief, and in which his most beloved companions are the Mother who bore Him and the faithful man who watched over his infancy and boyhood. We approach the ranks of this great army of women labourers with reverence and awe, seeing at their head these three august personages, the most so of all whose feet have ever touched and hallowed this earth of ours. And beneath the eyes of these three we desire to write every sentence, every word in these remaining pages, that so, the good done thereby and the consolation brought to sorely tried hearts, may be the pleasant crown of our toil in this book.

TOILERS IN THE SHOP.

In those Christian ages when religion was free to lighten gradually and then to break for ever the yoke of the bondsman, to lighten also the burden of the labouring man, to give to labour its dignity and to secure to the labourer by her edicts and influence a just remuneration, there was offered to the world no spectacle so sad, so disgraceful to the manhood of Christendom as these millions of women who, in the most civilised (!) countries, are, at this moment, subjected to labours more intolerable, and accompanied by prospects of livelihood much less certain,

than the worst criminals ever condemned to the galleys!

HOW THE MEDIÆVAL CHURCH FREED THE SERF.

It may be well to see, just as our boasted nineteenth century—the great century of *humanity*—draws towards its close, how the Church, in the year 1060, raised the poor serf, tied down to labour on the soil, to the dignity of a Freeman, and in whose name she did it. We are in a monastery where a solemn assemblage of lords ecclesiastical and temporal is held to bear witness to a solemn act of emancipation. Here is the instrument:

"In the name of God, the Almighty Father, and in the name of his only Son, who was incarnate to deliver men from the slavery of sin, and to adopt them as his sons, we, that He may deign to remit us the sins that we have committed, restore to liberty our men who have been subject to the yoke of servitude: for the Lord God has said: Remit and it shall be remitted to you: and in speaking to his Apostles, He said: You are all brethren. Therefore, if we are brethren, we ought not to keep any of our brethren in a servitude which they do not owe to us, as Truth Himself declares: Let no man call you master, blaming less the arrogance of human pride, than the injustice of domination: that is why we emancipate from all servitude our serfs, both men and women."*

* *Archives de Congues dans les Mémoires sur le Rouergue.*

HOW SERVITUDE IS RESTORED IN OUR MIDST.

How happens it that in a great city there is an army of women, young for the most part, some of them scarcely emerged from early girlhood, whose numbers are daily increasing, and who are as helplessly, almost as hopelessly, the slaves of our wealthy shopkeepers, as if they were born bondwomen on their hearths, and bound to give their taskmasters unlimited labour without the legal right to be housed, clothed, cared for in illness, or secured by their owners against sheer starvation!

Taking those among the weary toilers who are supposed to stand at the head of their class, the head dressmakers and saleswomen, though compelled to wear costlier attire than their sister seamstresses, they are not much better off in the way of remuneration. A head dressmaker has to serve an apprenticeship of several years of the hardest labour and closest application before she can hope for steady employment. During this long and laborious preparation, she has to support herself and to dress well; and, when she does succeed in finding a position, her scanty wages go almost entirely towards providing herself with the stylish and costly raiment which her employer insists on her wearing, in order, as he says, to please the fashionable customers who daily pass through her hands for measurement, &c. . . . Then, again, she is responsible for the work of her aids and of all the seamstresses who work under her direction. Stuffs lost or spoiled, dresses wrongly made, &c., are placed to her account. We say

nothing of the jealousies and countless annoyances inseparable from such a position.

HARD LOT OF DRESSMAKERS.

Together with this cruel responsibility there is toil without cessation, both for the head dressmaker and for all under her. How ill-requited are these interminable days, and, not unfrequently, sleepless nights, we need not say. The strongest constitutions soon give way, and the ruin thus wrought is irreparable. No medical skill avails to build up again a frame overworked long before its maturity, or, what is more, to raise up the spirit hopelessly broken by a long struggle against fatigue and poverty, intolerable tyranny and utter despair, at an age when a young girl needs the open air and the sunlight, and all that is most pleasant and cheering in God's bright world.

There are other hardships, other dangers, of a still more serious nature and to which we would fain not be forced even to allude. Let us, therefore, give this class one word of advice and exhortation.

ADVICE TO DRESSMAKERS AND SALESWOMEN.

Respect yourselves sovereignly; and, precisely because you are poor, dependent, and constrained to do hard work for very little money, never permit anyone placed above you in your labour so much as to breathe a word capable of bringing a blush to your cheek. That you are dependent on your labour is not a shame, nor a disgrace, nor a sin; your poverty is honourable, your anxious desire to make your

labour yield aid and support to the dear ones at home as well as to yourselves, is most honourable to you; but your virtue is God's treasure as well as your own most precious fortune: guard it with the spirit, the pride, the indomitable courage that become one who knows herself to be "a child of God."

You need not be told whence these dangers threaten you in your sacred honour: they come from the very necessity, sometimes, of being dressed above your means; more frequently still from that natural vanity which makes one desire to appear as well as persons of one's own age and class, and whose rich dress seems to make them beings of a different order. "Handsome is who handsome does!" Remember it well.

Then, be punctual to hours, be faithful and conscientious in your labour; be strictly and most scrupulously careful never to keep or lose or waste the most trifling portion of what is committed to you. And to this high-principled honesty add a truthfulness that would scorn to equivocate or prevaricate in any circumstance, even when your horror of falsehood may cost you your place.

There is a class of women toilers worse off even than the seamstresses or milliners: they are the saleswomen, who have to dress very expensively, to be on their feet twelve or thirteen hours daily, without being permitted to sit down once! and yet they are exposed at any moment to be discharged without warning or reason. There is not a morning on which, at their arrival at the shop door, they are not liable to be told that their services are not needed!

MODERN LEGISLATION HEEDLESS OF THIS SERVITUDE.

We hasten over these details with an indignation which we can but ill conceal; and yet we only touch very, very lightly on a few points, and not the worst points either, of a system which is daily growing in its oppressiveness, its pitiless cruelty towards the young of the weaker sex: and no manly voice is raised to protect them!

Besides, our indignation is all the more righteous that our boasted civilisation and improved statesmanship aim daily at ignoring more and more the protecting agencies employed in former times by the august Mother of nations and individuals, to shield women of every age, the girl and the maiden particularly, against the tyrannies of labour, the sufferings of extreme want, and the many temptations to which youth and poverty expose the sex. Alas! the day is past when that Mother could raise her voice, and compel the manufacturer and the shopkeeper, under pain of ruin temporal and eternal, to be just, to be kind, to be chaste and fatherly; and compel, if need were, the sovereign, the legislator, and the magistrate to interpose their authority between pitiless greed and helpless indigence!

WOMEN IN MANUFACTURES.

We have mentioned the words milliner and seamstress: they form an army by themselves. Of the still greater army of women employed in fabricating the rich and gorgeous materials that fill our merchant's warehouses, as well as the hundreds of other articles that are known to trade as the special industry

of women, we could now wish to speak befittingly. It is a hard task. But let us draw a picture of these mighty hosts of women-toilers from a work just now passing through the press, and compiled from the most authentic and the best official sources.

THE GLORIOUS SIDE OF MODERN INDUSTRY.

"What is called *la grande industrie* has given birth in the present age to so many wonders, and so many marvellous creations, that we are too apt to forget what has been the cost of all this progress. When we go into one of these exposition buildings where all the masterpieces of strength, patience, skill, and taste lie before us in splendid array, we cannot help yielding to a warm sentiment of admiration and gratitude towards that resistless power which is labouring unceasingly to transform the face of the earth. Here are light, soft, silky tissues whose mingled colours remind one of the brightest flowers, cloudy-looking gauzes whose warp and woof are invisible to the eye, sparkling gems which the miner dug up from the earth under the shape of a dull pebble, and whose artistic setting combines all the elegant fancies of every age and clime. Over there are still greater wonders, . . . telescopes, which shall soon leave the firmament without a single unexplained mystery, and render daily the impress of the divine hand more manifest; microscopes, which, in exploring the infinitely small, almost equal in analytical power the creative power itself. Further on you see these prodigious furnaces that produce weekly as much as two thousand tons of iron, these stupendous pieces of machinery with which you might think you could

move the world, these mechanical forces which, if combined, would equal the force of gravitation of this terrestrial globe; and then, again, the wonders of steam navigation, of railroad travelling, and photography! in fine, that electric cord which will soon enclose the earth in a symbolic circle, place us in instantaneous communication with our antipodes, and thus enable science to begin to realise the great unity of the human race foreshown by the Gospel.

"In presence of such an exhibition one almost feels one's self becoming a pagan, deifying over again human might and genius. . . .

"Such is the song of triumph and thanksgiving which industry breathes into her sons, and which all of us, on certain occasions, find ourselves singing. But we should soon change our language if we could only see the wonder-worker at her task in her own laboratory. We should wonderfully moderate our enthusiasm if we only knew how much the masterpieces displayed to our view have cost, and are still costing, of suffering, tears, and blood, of lives of men and women and children! The inventor has not been the only victim sacrificed to his love of science and humanity; not rarely entire generations have sacrificed their health in bringing about a single industrial progress."

THE MURDEROUS SIDE OF MODERN INDUSTRY.

"What is still worse, the most frequent victim of industry is not man, fitted by his nature for the struggles and dangers of active life and outdoor labour;—it is woman, it is the child which the implacable necessities of trade opposition and of the

laws of cheap production sacrifice, against all the laws of nature, to the unceasing toil of the factory. . .

"Medical science has drawn up a list of the diseases which women infallibly contract while pursuing this sort of life. We must summon courage enough to read this long and mournful catalogue.

"First of all comes the woman worker properly so called, who belongs to all ages and countries—the seamstress. Bent over her work during whole days, and sometimes whole nights, she loses her erect form and becomes round-shouldered; she frequently becomes a bloodless, consumptive thing, and almost certainly loses her sight. If she works on a sewing-machine, its continuous pulsations are sure to produce the most serious organic disorders.

"Girls who work at the loom are equally to be pitied: they are often quite young children, and with their little undeveloped bodies, and feeble strength, are forced to spend eleven, twelve, and thirteen hours standing upright near a loom, the continuous clatter of which never fails in the long run to disturb the nervous system.

"The woman, the young girl, whose skilful hands have woven the richly-coloured stuffs which delight our eyes, is subject to various ulcers and other serious disorders of the circulation of the blood, arising from this compulsory habit of standing all day; nay, she may be troubled with the painful disease known as the noise of the shuttle evermore re-echoing in her chest."*

* René Lavollée, *La Question du Travail des Femmes*, in *Le Correspondant* of October 25, 1877.

GODLESS INDUSTRY A SOCIAL PLAGUE-SPOT.

Serious students of history, scientific men, and travellers will appreciate our purpose in thus warning, by these illustrations, the public conscience in our own midst. One* whose unrivalled pen has written so many most beautiful and instructive volumes, thus describes the beginning and progress of that fearful plague:

ILLUSTRATED BY THE AFRICAN LOCUST PLAGUE.

"His finger was directed to a spot, where, amid the thick foliage, the gleam of a pool or of a marsh was visible. The various waters round about issuing from the gravel, or drained from the nightly damps, had run into a hollow, filled with decaying vegetation of former years, and were languidly filtered out into a brook, more healthy than the vast reservoir itself. Its bands were bordered with a deep broad layer of mud, a transition substance between the rich vegetable matter it once had been, and the multitudinous world of insect life which it was becoming. A cloud or mist at this time was hanging over it, high in air. A harsh and shrill sound, a whizzing or a chirping, proceeded from that cloud to the ear of the attentive listener. What these indications portended was plain. . . . Agellius and his guest looked at each other in dismay. 'It is the locusts,' they whispered to each other, as they went back into the cottage.

"Instances are recorded in history of clouds of the

* John Henry Newman.

devastating insect crossing the Black Sea to Poland, and the Mediterranean to Lombardy. It is as numerous in its species as it is wide in its range of territory. Brood follows brood, with a sort of family likeness. . . . Even one flight comprises myriads, upon myriads, passing imagination, to which the drops of rain or the sands of the sea are the only fit comparison. So dense are they, when upon the wing, that it is no exaggeration to say that they hide the sun. And so ubiquitous are they when they have alighted on the earth, that they simply cover or clothe its surface. . . . Not only the crops and fruits, but the foliage of the forest itself, nay, the small twigs and the bark of the trees are the victims of their curious and energetic rapacity. . . . They take pains to spoil what they leave. Like the Harpies, they smear everything that they touch with a miserable slime, which has the effect of a virus in corroding, or, as some say, in scorching and burning it. And then, as if all this were little, when they can do nothing else, they die—as if out of sheer malevolence to man, for the poisonous elements of their nature are then let loose and dispersed abroad, and create a pestilence; and they manage to destroy many more by their death than in their life."*

THE ANCIENT CHURCH THE SOLE HELPER OF WOMAN.

No, please God! She is still living to speak to the minds and hearts of the toiling millions, to cheer and sanctify and guard their homes; to bless the

* "Callista," ch. xiv. and xv.

union of the working man with his chosen companion, to baptise their children, and protect their souls and bodies from the advance of these odious doctrines, and the hosts of impure and loathsome creatures that undertake to propagate them.

There is no authority, no living institution, no power on earth conscious of its ability to save woman, to save our homes, to save society and civilisation from the joint destructive forces of an industry without a conscience and a socialism without a God, outside of that grand old Catholic Church, to whom alone have been made the promises of immortal life and unfailing love for the nations.

Would to God that a spark of the divine fire which ever burns in the heart of the great Mother, could glow in our words, as we now address ourselves to all enlightened readers in favour of these mighty armies of women toilers the whole world over!

APPEAL AGAINST HEARTLESS INDUSTRY.

We warn manufacturers and capitalists of every kind, who employ large numbers of persons, that they cannot persist in violating the laws of conscience, of humanity, of nature, without at length turning and banding against their heartless greed all the forces of the moral world—nature, humanity, and conscience, marshalled against them by a revolted public opinion.

Spare little children, spare girls of tender years, spare women who are burdened with the cares of maternity. You need the labour of the poor man; you shall need, presently, the labour of his sons and

daughters: pray, tell us, what sort of children can that overworked, bloodless, consumptive woman rear—if you persist in thinking, or in acting as if you thought, that her nerves and muscles can outlast the iron and steel of your machinery? And how often have your looms broken down or got out of order, since she began her long labours by day and her vigils by night in the midst of their ceaseless clatter? You are careful, however, to repair your looms, or to renew a broken shaft, or wheel, or bolt; but what care you for the restoration of that poor, pale woman's health when it gives way at length, or for its preservation by plentiful and wholesome food, by a warm and comfortable home, by refreshing sleep, and the simple, sweet delights of her own fireside?

IT CUTS DOWN THE TREE TO GATHER THE FRUIT.

Foolish man! You do not cut down in your garden the peach-tree, the pear-tree, or the apple-tree to get at their delicious fruit, for, you are mindful of the needs of another season; you would not set fire to the cotton-field in spring because a late frost had impaired the prospects of the next harvest: are the homes of your workmen, and workwomen, less dear and less precious to you, even in view of your industrial prospects, than the field in which the cotton they manipulate is grown? Is the peach, or the pear, or the apple, a fruit more rare or precious in your calculations than the children of your devoted toilers?

IT DESTROYS THE CHILD, THE WOMAN, AND THE HOME.

You are careful to prune the tree, to manure it, to take every measure that the currents of life, each year, shall be renewed and reinvigorated in trunk and branches; and you exhaust the currents of life in the veins of your working men and women, and care not what may befall them, provided that your mills turn out so many bales of goods at a stated time. The child you employ is crippled even before she enters girlhood; the fresh and blooming girl before she reaches womanhood is like a half-opened flower, drooping, colourless, and faded on its stem; while the once healthy and happy mother affords no nourishment, or only sickly nourishment to her puny offspring.

Is not this an outrage on the most sacred laws of nature, on what the moral world holds to be most dear?

LOOK ON THIS PICTURE.

But there is worse than this. We hold up as a mirror the following description of maidenhood and womanhood in European factories, and leave it to our experienced readers to say if the features seen therein are those of any of the girls or women employed in our great American establishments.

BIRTH OF THE FACTORY GIRL.

"Moralists show us the factory girl born amid want and corruption, almost entirely separated from her mother by the requirements of the workshop, forsaken rather than reared in one of those wretched

burrows which are the only home of the workingman, and in which the only examples set before her childish eyes are scenes of drunkenness and dissipation: these examples follow her first footsteps as she begins her industrial career, while still a child. For even at that tender age she can sift the coke cinders and watch a few spindles, or perform some other light labour not above her strength.

HER GIRLHOOD.

"It too frequently happens that by applying her to such untimely and barren labours as these, no time is left for religious instruction, for attendance at school, nay, even for the outdoor exercise so necessary to physical development. Thus the child grows up to adult age, and becomes an apprentice.

"At this critical epoch begin for factory girls the terrible trials that so few of them pass through victoriously. Left alone and unprotected, without experience or instruction, in the midst of vast and crowded workshops, subjected to daily labour lasting eleven, twelve, or thirteen hours, obliged to be at work before dawn and to leave it after nightfall, obliged also, too often, to work side by side with men, and almost invariably underpaid for their labour—these poor girls are exposed to ever-present, temptations and allurements to sin.

HER MAIDENHOOD AND ITS DANGERS.

"Should it happen that the sexes are separated in the workshop the girls are still under the direction of the male superintendents, who, from their autho-

rity and influence can do great mischief. In fine, during the long working hours, in the unavoidable half-intimacy arising from proximity in the same occupation, conversations are carried on in half-whispers, and very unedifying confidences are made by one girl to another, which open up to an innocent soul an evil world unsuspected hitherto. Then, there are coarse jokes, indelicate allusions, raillery more fatal than outspoken obscenity, and, above all, the contagious example of their associates, all combining to destroy the very last remnants of native modesty preserved beneath the paternal roof. . . .

HER MARRIED LIFE.

"The industrial labour of women, and this is its most serious result, tends to the utter destruction of the working man's family, and the desertion of his home. Leaving the house before sunrise, and returning to it after dark, and tied down to her post in the workshop during the daytime, the working woman is only in name a wife and a mother; she is degraded down to the nature of a factory hand. There are no more meals in common, at least, during the day; for she has no time to prepare them. There are no fireside joys for her: how can she tidy and brighten things in her poor little home when she comes back to it after twelve hours of hard labour, harassed, exhausted, and only yearning for rest and sleep? There are no sweet meetings at evening, after the day's toil, between husband, wife, and children. The husband knows that he will find no fire on his hearth, no warm food to cheer him, nothing but a dirty and untidy room, and a nervous and ill-tempered

woman, so he will go, like his mates, to the tavern, to eat and drink with them there, and to go home at midnight, if he goes home at all.

HER BARREN AND DESOLATE HOME: BABY FARMING.

"There are no children in these desolate homes. They are a nuisance to parents who have to work all day—they take up too much time. Scarcely are they born, when they are sent to nurse in some of these well-known 'baby-farms,' where the deaths among these little innocents yearly amount to 25, 30, 40, 50, 60, and 70 per cent. . . . All are thus deprived of this tender care so needed by infancy, of these first teachings given by a mother through her tears or her smiles; they lack that first education on a mother's knees (*l'éducation des langes*), which no after-training can supply."*

This, then, is the plague-spot, this the nature of the pestilence. Assuredly there is anything but exaggeration in this statement. There are manufacturers, we gladly acknowledge it, in our great industrial districts, who are careful both of the health and comfort, and of the morality of their working-men and women.

THE EXTENSION OF INDUSTRY A BLUNDER.

Thank God this plague-spot, which is a political, a social, and a moral blunder, is as yet confined within narrow limits; and in the Middle States, in the South, and the growing West, American homes are still sanctuaries of domestic virtue and happiness,

* *La Question du Travail des Femmes en France et à l'étranger.*

woman is not degraded to a something little better than a machine, and man is not likely to become a socialist, "a working-man made drunk and poisoned with the wine of communism and unbelief," and becoming, living and dying, like the locust plague, the curse and blight of a continent which God has made so beautiful and so wealthy.

But, impossible as it is to reach or remedy this enormous evil in its effects on family life, on women and young girls, we can, at least, try to make our instructions and exhortations reach the homes and hearts of these vast armies of poor toilers—noble toilers, so many of them—worthy of all the sympathy and zeal of true-hearted men and women throughout the country.

HOW THE CHURCH PROTECTED WOMEN TOILERS IN THE MIDDLE AGES.

We have related above how the Church, in the ages of faith, freed the slave and the serf from their bondage; we might have told how she protected labour and industry of every description, encouraging both the freedmen farmers in the country, and artisans and labourers in the towns, to form associations for mutual aid and defence. She only interposed her authority to prevent such associations or guilds from becoming oppressive to their own members, or aggressive towards others. She limited her care over them to the securing of obedience of the laws of God and the State by every one of their members, and to the practice of justice and brotherly charity towards each other. As early as the twelfth century the industry of the Low Countries (compris-

ing the present kingdoms of Holland and Belgium) was very much developed, while, on account of the very narrow limits of arable land, agricultural occupations were confined, in some parts, to comparatively few. Hence there were many obstacles towards the settlement of poor girls, or obtaining proper employment for them, and a large proportion of persons of the sex were thus forced to live in celibacy, and left without any certain means of subsistence.

It was a sad state of things, for which the Church alone, the common parent, could find a remedy. Just when this multitude of homeless and unprotected women were at their worst, God sent a holy priest called Lambert-le-Bègue (or Lambert the Stammerer), who united these poor defenceless girls into communities, half monastic and half industrial, where, living under a rule, and obeying one common superior chosen by themselves, all could unite a life of retirement and prayer with a life of profitable labour—all who chose making the ordinary vows of chastity and obedience during the time they chose to remain within the protection of the community, the others binding themselves to observe the rules while living there. Both the civil and the ecclesiastical authorities united to secure such a blessed retreat from danger or intrusion of any kind; and thus the women toilers who swarmed over the land found there either a sweet, safe, and permanent home, if they chose to abide there and accept the light yoke of the rule, or they found a secure and blissful home —as compared with the lot of their sisters outside— while they laboured for a time in laying up provision for the future, and practising all the virtues they

might bring with their savings to an independent home of their own.

ADVICE TO YOUNG WOMEN IN FACTORIES.

As things are in our midst, we can only encourage, in our manufacturing towns, young women working there, far away from their families, to be most careful in choosing both their boarding-houses and their companions outside of labour hours. Would to God there existed in every great industrial centre some religious order of women who would provide comfortable, airy, and secure homes for these unprotected girls, and take a motherly interest in finding them safe companions, rational and improving amusements—all the means of sweet rest for mind, and heart, and body after their long hours of factory work! In such retreats, where the pure and pious atmosphere of home affection would surround them, the Sunday would be truly made for these weary ones a day of spiritual and bodily recreation, heart and limbs would recover strength enough to face anew the labours and trials of the coming week; and from amid the fatigues and depression of the week, these poor young toilers could look forward to the repose of Sunday, and to the loving care of holy women who would combine for them the tenderness of a mother, and the trustfulness of a sister.

HOW THEY ARE TO REFRESH HEART AND MIND.

The first need of a young girl, thrown a stranger into a large workshop, is to find a girl of her own age on whom she can lean, and to whom she may open her heart. This is an imperious necessity, and

the danger is that, in yielding to it, an untrustworthy companion may be chosen. There are many ways to avoid a choice so disastrous to the new-comer. It is impossible that there should not be, in every large workshop, certainly in every factory, some one girl, or several, distinguished for goodness, prudence, and charity. These are well-known to their companions, and a stranger, anxious to find out one such who may be a guide and counsellor to her, has only to look about her at first. Her own instincts, if she be truly good and God-fearing, will soon direct her safely, in virtue of that rule by which like soon discovers like. Besides, if God places on your path a true priest, a man of God, who knows his flock well, he will easily and willingly direct you, a stranger, and desirous of saving your own soul, to some person who will prove a true and trusty friend to you. There are, too, in every village and town, in every manufacturing centre, several families, at least, whose goodness is as well known to all as the town-hall or the parish church. Seek an acquaintance with these. If you be what we have supposed you to be, they will have no hesitation in showing you kindness and hospitality at first, and then, when they know you better, in admitting you to their intimacy. It will be a priceless blessing for you to find some such a household where your heart can be rested and refreshed once a week or more, by breathing the atmosphere of purity and peace that fills it, by letting the loving kindness of true hearts flow into your own just as the silent dew, or the soft, warm summer rains sink into the thirsty and parched earth. And when you are privileged to be received

into such a household, show how highly you value it by seeking no other so long as they are contented to allow you to find your needed rest and recreation there. Let your respect, your gratitude, impel you to be more attentive, more kind, more devoted daily to every member of the family.

VALUE OF A TRUE FRIEND.

Should you not find a family of this description, God will send you a true friend; and be both thankful and devoted to her. Two hearts drawn to each other by that love which has God for its principle, will find a thousand ways of pleasing each other, will be such a rest to each other from care, and grief, and discouragement. Two girls truly devoted to each other will not fail to devise, from week to week, new methods of recreation and amusement. Their good share of woman's wit will be good security against wearisomeness. But being, as we have said, God-fearing, they will both seek together in their exercises of piety, and the frequent use of the sacraments, the surest and sweetest heart-rest within reach of the lonely and the toilworn.

Yes, for everyone of you, poor children of toil, no matter on what part of the busy, noisy, wearisome factory-world you happen to read this, be sure that there is no refreshment so great and strengthening as that which you will get in the heart of a friend full of God's love and grace, and in going frequently to His heart who is your Redeemer, and your chiefest rest on earth and in heaven.

READING AND MUSIC.

But the mind also needs repose and refreshment. If you have neither books nor other safe amusement, try to have the conversation of a friend, when you are freed from toil, and talk of pleasant things, forgetting the workshop, with its sights and sounds, and the whole world of labour and wretchedness connected with it. If there are libraries from which you can borrow, then try to have some work that can really rest your mind, that can take you away into a better and brighter world than that in which you are condemned to toil on from day to day. If possible, read this book aloud with your friend; read in turns, and, as well as you can, improving yourselves thereby. Should there be singing classes anywhere in which you can join, and should God have given you a good voice, then learn to sing, and sing with your whole soul. The exercise will develop your chest, and will give you for after-life a most delightful means of recreation for yourself and others.

Should you be employed on factory work demanding education and a certain culture, if you have learned instrumental and vocal music, then, indeed, will it be your own fault if your leisure hours do not afford you recreation that will be truly refreshing and elevating as well. Cultivate most assiduously both of these accomplishments, and make them useful in lightening the burden and refining the life of those of your sister labourers who are less fortunate than yourself.

BEWARE OF EXTRAVAGANCE IN DRESS.

The temptation to dress as well as the best, and then to outshine the most dressy, is one to which many girls weakly yield. They forget that this temptation leads to others far more fatal, to the love of admiration, and to the road to ruin. Dress neatly always, never showily; and never be tempted to dress beyond your means, or even to go in dress to the full limit of your means. Neither men of sense nor women of sense admire showy girls; because they are not girls of well-balanced minds, or, but too frequently, of trustworthy virtue. Be anxious to cultivate both your mind and your heart: store the one with useful knowledge and the other with the fear and love of God. Showy hats and fine feathers often cover brains little better than a peacock's; and a showy silk dress is but a sorry covering for a fickle heart or a shaky reputation.

BE SAVING OF YOUR WAGES.

No matter how scanty they may be, put by a part, though never so small, every week. Your generosity, while toiling so hard and rewarded so poorly, must be in denying yourself a good many little things, which, if indulged in, would not add much to your happiness, and would take far too much from your little purse. Give moderately to such charities as deserve your support: it is not expected of you that you can have much to give. And piety does not demand that you should leave yourself unprovided against the day of need.

BE PURE-HEARTED AND BRAVE-HEARTED.

You will find among your companions many who

have never stained by deliberate venial sin their baptismal robe of innocence. If God has so shielded your soul, that you are thus privileged, then no words we could address to you could convey suitably our sense of the divine mercy in your behalf. You have read in the Old Testament, history of the three Hebrew children cast into the flaming furnace by order of the impious Babylonian King. God's angel was with them in the flame, preventing it from harming them, while they sang a hymn of triumph to the glory of their Almighty benefactor.

You know that your soul is as dear to the God who created and redeemed it as these souls were to Him before he became incarnate. You also know that his angel is ever with you to save, befriend, and protect you in every danger. It depends on you alone to put away that friendship and protection from you, or to secure it more and more by your humility and fidelity.

CHAPTER XIX.

SUPPLEMENTARY.

As we began this book by the description of the home and its sanctities, so do we now return to it before concluding, to point out two of the most precious and meritorious forms of motherly devotion—in the person of the invalid mother, whom God keeps on her bed of sickness for years, like a living lesson of heroism in suffering, and the stepmother who takes on herself the painful and difficult duties of motherhood towards the children of another. There are so many of both of these classes to be found in Christian homes—women of angelic lives, models of perfect patience and long-suffering meekness! Let the lessons their examples teach us thus complete the entire circle of home-duties and home-virtues.

THE INVALID MOTHER.

A young married woman of uncommon beauty and accomplishments, extensively known for her successful activity in every cause of public beneficence or usefulness, was paralysed a few months after the birth of her sixth child. She was the idol of her household and her large circle of acquaintance. For she had the rare, rare felicity of creating neither envy

nor jealousy by all her shining qualities, and by her untiring labours outside of her own home. She had, in the truest sense of the word, educated her husband, whose mind and heart, both very richly endowed, had been neglected, in consequence of the early death of his mother; she had spurred him on to be foremost in his profession, and he was almost at its head, when this terrible affliction befell them; and she had made him a sincere and practical Christian. She would allow no one to teach her little children but herself, and her training of them proved that she was just as admirable in imparting knowledge as she was in her facility for acquiring it. She had three sisters-in-law in the house, one her equal in years, and the two others her juniors; she had taught and trained them, making them adore her first, and then inspiring them with a keen appetite for knowledge. And she had made it a duty she never neglected, from the very first day she entered her husband's home, to catechise her numerous servants, teaching such of them as did not know their letters, reading, writing, and arithmetic.

And most touching it was to see the grief and consternation of these good servants, when it was first announced that their worshipped mistress was in imminent danger of death. The coachman who was sent in haste for the priest—a great, burly, old cavalry-man, who had seen twenty battles—could scarcely tell his message intelligibly, and wept all the way back to the house. The rest of the servants were in the hall reciting, as best they could, the Litany of the Saints. The little patient herself, and her noble husband were worthy of each other, he

holding her hand and whispering sweet words of comfort and resignation to the Divine Will. But God spared that precious life for ten years more. The use of her lower limbs, however, she never recovered.

But—as her husband afterwards testified—never once in their most unreserved intimacy, did she express the faintest regret at being thus rendered inactive and helpless in the very prime of all her glorious utility. She would repeat continually, that this was God's crowning mercy to her, the pledge of her predestination, her being thus nailed to her cross with her dear Lord. All her prayers were said, all her daily actions performed during these ten years in thanksgiving for this most precious boon of suffering.

Nor did she, so far as her physician permitted, and when her recovered strength allowed her, give over to others the care of instructing her children, or of finishing the education of her younger sister-in-law. Nor did she discontinue her efforts to benefit the poor of the city and neighbourhood, or to encourage every project in favour of religion. From her sick-bed she still directed all her former fellow-labourers who more than ever revered her and followed her counsels.

But who can speak worthily of the devoted care of every individual in that household for one so unselfish as was their beloved invalid? Her sisters, her children, her servants all vied with each other in their ardent desire to do her every service her condition required. They could scarcely endure to see any, even among her near relatives, allowed the privilege of waiting on her during her long nights of torture;

for the last eighteen months of her life were one long agony. Life seemed to retreat slowly from one member to another, till she could move nothing but her head; but there the sweet soul dwelt serene to the end, like the mistress of an inundated house, as the destroying waters rise steadily around her, finds her last refuge on the roof-top—there, with cheerful countenance and brave, loving words, consoling her dear ones while all is slowly undermined and swept away beneath her.

It was indeed, a privilege to listen to the inspired words about God, and duty, and bearing the cross after Christ, and the glories of the everlasting kingdom, that she poured forth unceasingly to all who approached her; it was like a lesson from the "Imitation of Christ," to look for a few moments on that pale, sweet face all aglow with the light and love of the world, into which she seemed to have entered. . . . And when all was over, and the patient sufferer was at rest forever, the noble husband arose from his knees, and with uplifted arms, as if he too would follow his beloved companion, exclaimed, "I thank thee, O my God! the lessons of such a life and such a death are to me and mine the most precious of all thy favours!" And forthwith he made all present unite with him in singing the *Te Deum.*

How many such mothers are to be found in families of all classes, and what beautiful examples of filial piety, and unwearied devotedness on the part of families, even the poorest and most sadly burdened, could we not relate, were it not that we are warned to bring these teachings to a timely conclusion!

THE STEPMOTHER.

We must not part with this most worshipful embodiment of human goodness, the true mother, the queen and idol of the home, without doing reverence to another figure, often called by death and necessity to fill the mother's place in the household, and to discharge towards her orphans the sacred obligations attached to the place of parent.

If there is anything on earth which can compensate a child for the loss of a mother at that age when the inspired love of a true motherly heart can read clearly the instincts of the childish soul, and when her firm and tender hand is so needed to unfold what is good and repress what is evil, that compensation can only be found in the womanly wisdom and devotion of a second mother, of her whom the world outside the family designate as stepmother.

Bad stepmothers are the exceptions to the generality of devoted, conscientious, and self-sacrificing women, who are selected by widowed fathers, with a fond parental solicitude, to be true mothers to their orphaned children. Need we speak here of the sore necessity which so often compels a father, in whose soul the dead still lives and is loved with an enduring love, to choose a second mother for his children, a mistress for his household? Even among the upper and wealthy classes, where so many means can be devised for obtaining persons to educate young orphans, there is often a peremptory reason for a second marriage. But among the labouring classes this necessity is far otherwise urgent and frequent. So, glancing merely at the reasons which justify the best of parents in contracting an alliance

which is repugnant to their own finest sense, and without even naming such causes, we proceed to plead in favour of the stepmother, before describing her duties.

WHAT MAKES A STEPMOTHER'S POSITION IRKSOME.

In ninety-nine cases out of a hundred, the relatives of a deceased wife, even when they are good and virtuous people, look with coldness or aversion on the woman who takes the place of mother towards the children of their lost daughter and sister. And it is almost impossible, if the orphans are of an age to understand the difference between a mother and a stepmother, that they should not be made to show these unkindly feelings. The lot of a stepmother is, therefore, not an enviable one. And when she is a person who accepts the position and its responsibilities with the firm purpose of doing, to the very best of her power, a true mother's part, she is most deserving of sympathy, support, and unlimited kindness.

It is most certainly the duty of the deceased wife's family, instead of putting an obstacle in the way of her successor, to aid her, on the contrary, towards the discharge of her difficult and delicate office. It is their duty, because the dearest interests of the orphans themselves are involved in the education their second mother will give them. It would seem, then, that every possible consideration of charity and self-interest ought to induce both the father's relatives and those of his deceased wife to join hands in making the new mistress of the home welcome, cordially welcome; and in aiding her by every

demonstration of good will and affection to be, as she purposes, a loving mother to the children she takes to her heart to cherish and to rear.

Instead of doing what nature and common sense would point out, as the only judicious and beneficial course to follow, motives of sordid interest upset both the judgment and the conscience even among good Christian folk. Thus a serious responsibility is incurred through criminal and unwarrantable meddlesomeness; the education of the orphans and the happiness of their home are forever compromised.

This, however, is taking things at their worst. For the stepmother herself we have none but words of encouragement, if she be only bent on doing her duty thoroughly. She must make her husband feel that she has most truly adopted his children as her own. He soon discovers whether her love is a true one or not. Nor will his children be long in finding out whether or not the heart to which they are pressed beats with a genuine motherly tenderness for them. The eyes of children are very wise. They look into yours with a penetrating and steadfast gaze which is like the sounding-rod dropped down into the dark, deep waters and bringing up with it the secrets of the ocean-bed. You cannot conceal from these innocent but infallible eyes the secret of your inmost soul. They read you through and through in a marvellously brief space of time.

BEGIN BY LOVING YOUR HUSBAND'S CHILDREN AS YOUR OWN.

This is God's will in your regard; all his graces will aid you towards this most necessary and blissful

result. Resolve, in your heart of hearts, that you will be obedient to Him in this, and devote henceforward your whole energy to its attainment. Shall we recommend one practice of piety to you, and beseech you to be earnest and faithful in its fulfilment? From the day you take possession of your new home make a league with its guardian angels, and take them as your helpers, your counsellors, companions, and friends in the difficult task of discharging your motherly duties. This will be all the more necessary for you, if you find that there are evil influences at work to wean your children's hearts from you. Here is what we recommend in imitation of that wonderful man, the Blessed Peter Favre, one of the lights of the 16th century, whom popes and saints revered during his lifetime as a man filled with the Holy Spirit.

Whenever he spent even a single night in a new house, it was his custom on crossing the threshold silently to invoke the assistance of the angels to whose care it was committed, and, on being shown into the apartment prepared for himself, he would close the door, and kneel successively in each corner, beseeching the Divine Majesty to grant him the special protection of the spirits of light, and to drive away the spirits of darkness. Then, after reciting prayers to the guardian angels, he would sprinkle holy water over the room.

This is not superstition, but enlightened Catholic devotion. For the more we study divine things, the more light we obtain on the relations between this outward world we see and touch and the invisible and spiritual world, the more does the presence of

these spirits, good and evil, become an ever-present reality to us. Like Eliseus and his servant, our eyes are opened to see the earth and the mountains round about covered with horsemen and chariots of fire, God's faithful host sent to protect those who do his work, and, though we may be appalled sometimes by the numbers and might of his enemies, we shall feel, like the great Hebrew prophet, that there are more with us than against us.

You are a Christian woman;—you must be a supernatural woman. You will have evil passions, earthly interests and feelings, and the malignant influences of the fallen angels to counteract; but you will have on your side God and his angels; you will have the love, the veneration, the unbounded confidence of your husband. You will also have the pure and devoted love of his children; for true love cannot help being loved in return. But all this must be the result of your own supernatural devotion and piety.

CONCLUSION.

And so we are still before the CHRISTIAN HOME, with the hosts of the guardian spirits camped round about, visible to the eye of our soul, like the lights of a great city seen through a mist from an overhanging mountain. Here are mothers, worthy of being on earth, the living images of God's unsleeping watchfulness and unfathomable tenderness; daughters formed to their mother's perfect likeness, all innocence, self-denial, and unsparing devotion to the happiness of others; sons worthy to be the unselfish servants of such mothers and such sisters,

trained to be the fearless and spotless knights of Truth and Justice in the evil days, and the promoters of all true liberty and progress in the peaceful days—at all times the true sons of God; the vast armies of the daughters of toil, each bearing on her forehead the sign of Christ, each keeping her eyes fixed on Him whose whole life was labour, and crucifixion, and a martyrdom; and above all this vast and glorious array, the heavens opened, as in the vision of the great Patriarch, a pathway, like a far-stretching flight of shining steps ascending from earth to the City of God on high, the wide gates thrown open, angels of light ever moving along them in their brotherly ministration, and the Eternal God and Father of all amid the myriads of angels and saints, bending down to us with outstretched arms and radiant countenance, while these words fall upon our ears and sink into our souls, like sounds of divinest music on the hushed waters:—

"Blessed are the poor! . . . Blessed are the meek! . . . Blessed are they that mourn! . . . Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after justice! . . . Blessed are the merciful! . . . Blessed are the clean of heart! . . . Blessed are the peacemakers! . . . Blessed are they that suffer persecution! . . . Be glad and rejoice, for your reward is very great in heaven!"

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